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PACIFIC STUDIES

Vol. 16, No. 3

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RIVERS (W.H.R.) REVISITED: MATRILINY IN SOUTHERN BOUGAINVILLE

PART 1: INTRODUCTION, THE SIWAI, THE NAGOVISI

Douglas L. Oliver
Honolulu

Introduction

The purpose of this essay is to compare the matrilineal institutions of four linguistically related non-Austronesian-speaking peoples of southern Bougainville and to search for factors that might have resulted in their divergences from what may once have been a common form. Decades ago I wrote two papers comparing some religious and political institutions of three of them (Oliver 1943, 1971). For one of those, the Siwai,¹ the data derived from my own fieldwork, in 1938–1939. For the second, the Buin, I drew on published reports by Richard and Hilde Thurnwald. And for the third, the Nagovisi, I had to depend upon my own hasty one-month survey of them in 1939. Since I wrote those two papers, other anthropologists have carried out intensive field studies on two of those peoples: Jared Keil on the Buin (from 1971 to 1973), and Jill Nash and Donald Mitchell on the Nagovisi (from 1969 to 1973). In addition, Eugene Ogan carried out field studies, between 1962 and 1978, on the Nasioi, the fourth of the non-Austronesian (NAN) peoples of southern Bougainville, thereby enabling me to include them in this comparison. At the times of their initial field studies I was the academic adviser of all four of the students (which they then were), but I did not “advise” them on what to focus in their fieldwork or reports. Fortunately for present purposes, however, the topic of descent and de-

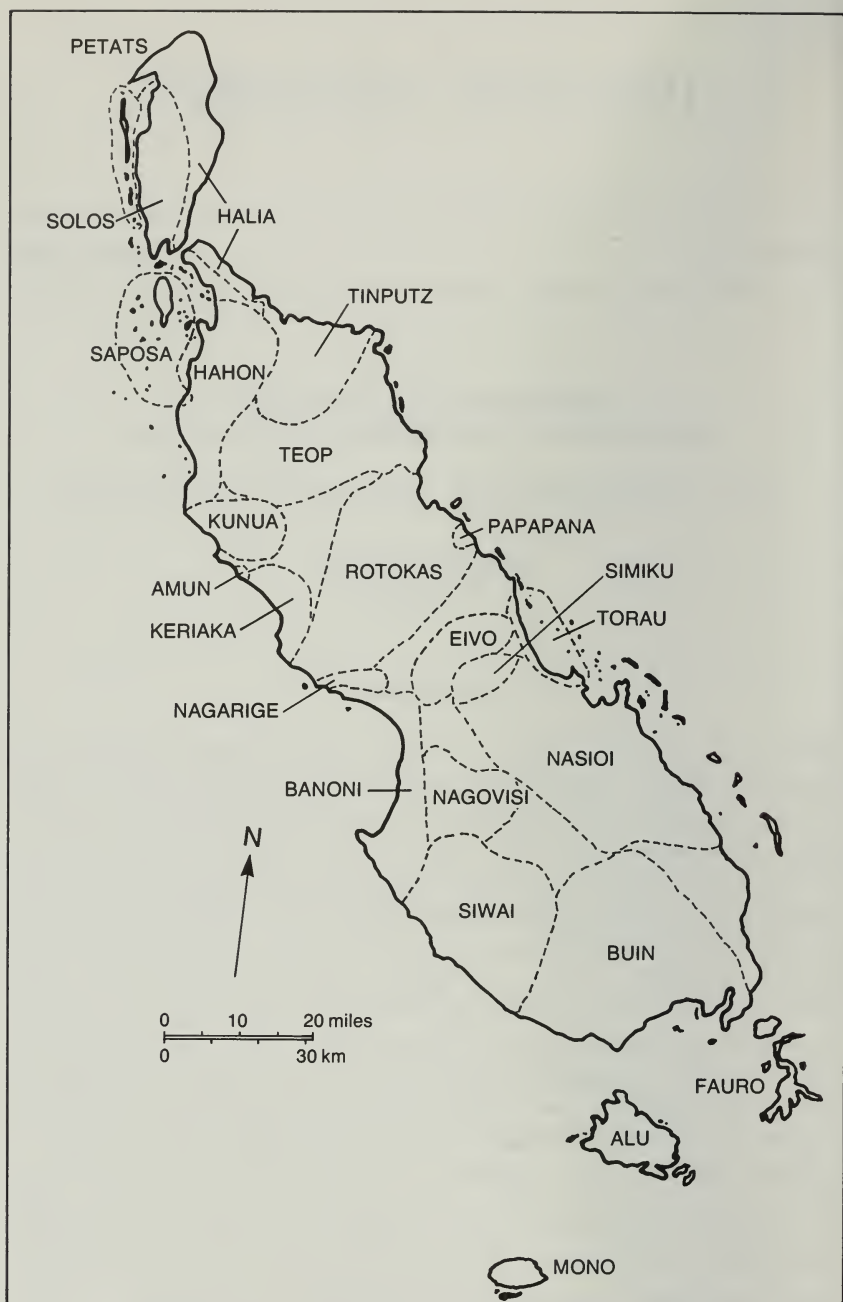


FIGURE 1. Language areas

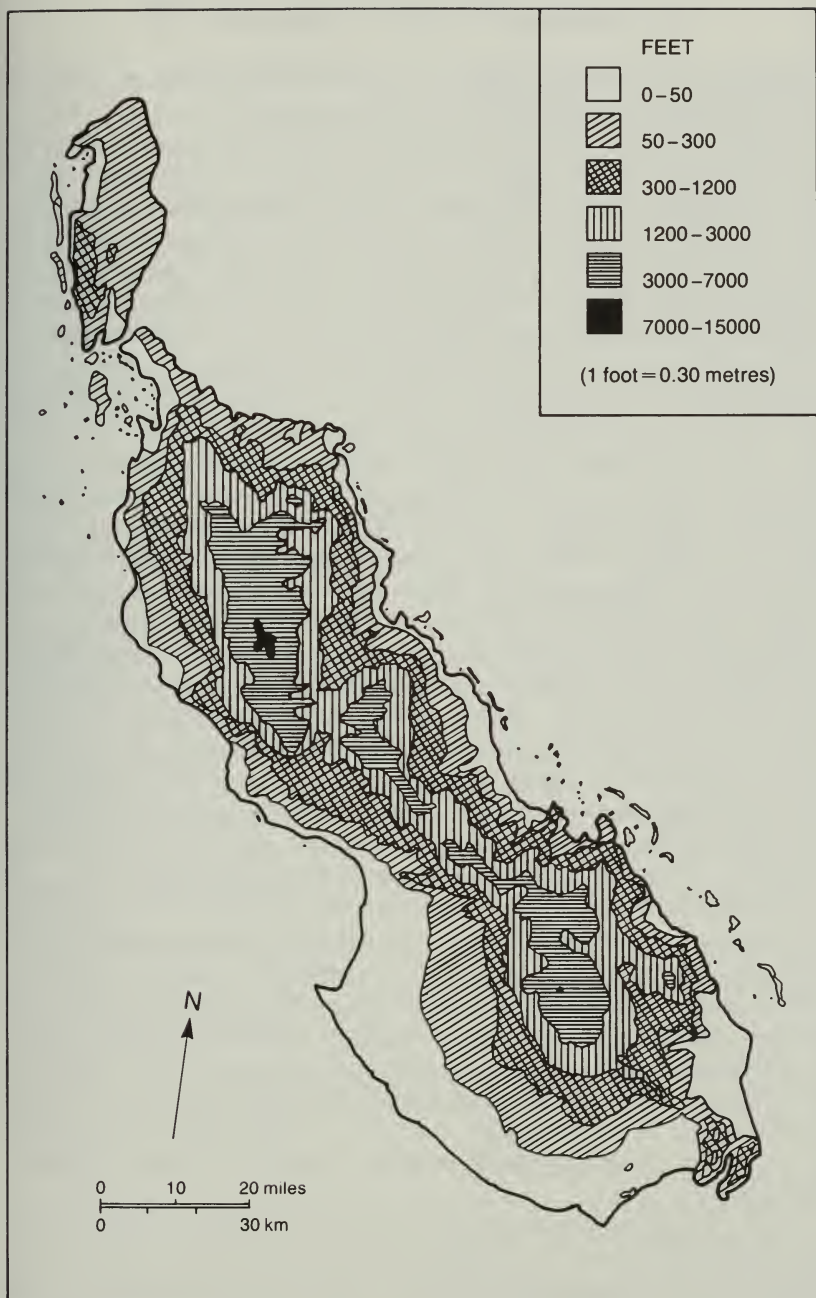


FIGURE 2. Altitudes

scentlike social units was, willy-nilly, central to their research, and thus their findings are suitable for use in this comparison.

I undertake this exercise knowing full well that its subject is currently superannuated. It is not only not “postmodern,” it is not even “modern”; the genre it exemplifies became unfashionable at least seventy-five years ago. Not to worry: being myself superannuated, I can write with the comfort that comes from familiarity and with the fancy that my words may be of passing interest to other anthropologists of my chronological and ideological generation—or to historians of our discipline.

The rationale for this comparison lies not only in the locations of the four peoples—i.e., their adjacency—but, more crucially, in their historical—or, rather, prehistorical—cultural interrelations, as manifested in their profound linguistic similarities: their respective languages constitute all four members of the Southern stock of Bougainville’s eight NAN languages. (Bougainville’s four other NAN languages make up a Northern stock, while its nine, mostly coastal, Austronesian (AN) languages are part of a stock represented also on Buka Island and elsewhere in the region.) This classification, which was proposed in 1963 by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) linguists Jerry Allen and Conrad Hurd, was based on their version of the “shared-cognate-percentage” method popularized by Swadesh. In their version the central dialects of the four Southern-stock NAN languages were found to share from 17 to 50 percent of cognates for words of their experimental test-word list. The same procedure showed the stock to be subdivided into two “families,” consisting of Nasioi-Nagovisi (which share 50 percent of their test-list cognates), and Siwai-Buin (which share 34 percent of theirs).

Application of this method also showed all eight of Bougainville’s NAN languages to share at least 4 percent of their test-list cognates and, thus, by this method of comparison to constitute a single “phylum.” What’s more, judging by the locations where these languages were recently spoken, their sharing of cognates probably derived mainly from “descent” from a common ancestral language rather than from interlanguage lending. Word sharing also occurs between certain of Bougainville’s NAN languages and their neighboring AN languages (e.g., between Nagovisi and Banoni), but mainly, I assume, as a result of lending.

To the best of my knowledge, the languages of Bougainville’s Southern NAN stock have not yet been subjected by linguists to the kind of lexical—that is, glottochronological—comparison that might provide informed guesses about how long ago their speakers have been effectively separated from one another. That could, however, have been a

very long time indeed. Recent archaeological finds on neighboring Buka Island indicate that pioneer settlements there, from the direction of New Ireland, occurred about 28,000 years ago,² and no presently known geographic barrier would have impeded the spread of the descendants of those and other early Buka settlers onto and throughout most of Bougainville, which is much larger and richer in food-getting resources and is now separated from Buka by a water passage only a few hundred meters wide. (In fact, subsequent to the pioneer settlements on Buka there were times of lowered sea level when the two islands were united above sea level [Spriggs 1992:279].) In the absence of credible glottochronological findings, it is not possible to say when the speakers of the Southern-stock NAN languages began to separate into their present fourfold division. But it is my inference that the process took place several millennia ago, long before the arrival onto the islands' adjoining coasts of peoples speaking AN languages³—some of the latter (i.e., the Torau) having migrated from Shortland Island only a century and a half ago (Terrell and Irwin 1972; Irwin 1973; Oliver 1991:1–13; Spriggs 1992). I do not mean to imply that the separation one from another of the Southern-stock peoples ever became complete; linguistic and other cultural traits doubtless circulated, from one language area to another, throughout the Southern-stock region and not just along their linguistic boundary zones. Moreover, throughout the present century, cultural exchanges (including marriages) have been taking place continuously between Nagovisi and Banoni, Nagovisi and Siwai, and Siwai and Buin. Also, oversea trade between Buin-Siwai and residents of Alu (Shortland Island) and Mono (Treasury Island) has been occurring for centuries.

In other words, although the four Southern-stock NAN-speaking peoples involved in my comparison doubtless shared a cultural ancestry and have been distinct from one another for a very long time, they have not remained wholly isolated—neither from one another nor from nearby and more “alien” AN-speaking peoples—a circumstance that might be said to have “contaminated” somewhat the “controlled” aspect of the comparison in this essay.

Another source of “contamination” derives from the circumstance that the field studies for this comparison were conducted at different times: those on the Siwai in 1938–1939, those on the Nagovisi, Nasioi, and Buin three decades later—decades during which several extrinsic events produced some major changes in all three societies, including devastations accompanying World War II, a blight-induced transition from taro to sweet potatoes in subsistence gardening, and, more

recently, the widespread adoption of cash cropping and a rapid acceleration of population increase (Oliver 1991: chaps. 6, 7, 9). However, the changes wrought in social organization by those more recent occurrences will not be treated in this essay.

The era selected for focus is the third decade of this century, that is, the period *after* European goods had begun to trickle into southern Bougainville and *after* the colonial authorities, first German, then Australian, had effectively outlawed local feuding, but *before* the Christian missions had effected radical changes in indigenous religions and choice of spouse. The selection of this era for comparison will necessitate some conjecture, thereby thickening the study's archaic patina.

Another circumstance that complicates the comparison to be performed is that most of it is based on data drawn mainly from one geographic subdivision of each of the four peoples—or cultures or language areas or ethnic areas—compared. Were each of the four “peoples” culturally homogeneous (especially with respect to matriliney), this circumstance would entail no problem. However, it is known that three of them—the Siwai, the Nasioi, and the Buin—had localized differences in some of their beliefs and practices relating to matriliney—although no intensive study has been made of the other locales. (Such heterogeneity may also have been characteristic of the Nagovisi, but that has not yet been reported in print.) In what follows most of the potential ambiguities arising out of this circumstance will, I trust, be resolved by context. In other cases, when a distinction is necessary I shall try to clarify by distinguishing between “study area” and “tribe”—between, for example, the Aropa Valley Nasioi (where most of Ogan's researches were conducted) and *the* Nasioi or the Nasioi *tribe* (i.e., as a whole).⁴

The hypothesis that motivates the comparison is that the four “tribes” once shared not only a single language but a common form of matrilineal institution as well. With the passage of time and the differentiation of the “ancestral” single-language tribe into four, the matrilineal beliefs and practices of the four also diverged—along with some other beliefs and practices. Meanwhile, certain other features of their cultures retained, more or less, their common “ancestral” forms, which will now be listed and briefly described.

Subsistence Technologies

During the 1930s all four tribes involved in this study continued to produce most of their food by the age-old method of long-fallow swidden gardening of root crops and plantains. The main crop was taro;

recently introduced sweet potatoes were also grown but in fairly small quantities. In addition, some food use was made of wild or semidomesticated coconuts, sago, breadfruit, and canarium almonds. Garden-grown tobacco was smoked—continually—in trade-store pipes, and domesticated areca nut was chewed, with lime and pepper catkins, almost as frequently. Much energy was devoted to the feeding of pigs, with enough garden produce to keep them domesticated. The few chickens present around most households had to fend for themselves; their flesh was occasionally eaten but rarely their eggs (which were in any case difficult to find). The rail-thin dogs that slunk around some households were used mainly in the hunting of possums and feral pigs. Occasionally, people engaged in stream fishing—with traps, bow and arrow, and hand netting—sometimes with, sometimes without stream damming.

All buildings continued to be made of wood and leaves. During this time most people past early childhood wore a trade-store calico lava-lava, but all other garments (e.g., rain capes, hats) as well as most other locally crafted items (e.g., weapons, sleeping mats, carrying straps) were still being made of wood or plant fibers.

By the 1930s the indigenous cutting tools of stone and bamboo had been universally replaced by steel ones—a few large axes but mostly machetes and adze-hafted blades—most of them bought in coastal trade stores with Australian currency earned by work on European plantations. These tools made men's work (land clearing, fence building, and house construction) easier and faster, but women continued to carry out their principal gardening jobs (planting, weeding, and harvesting) with their pre-European type of wooden digging stick.

A few coastside Buins and Nasiois made a little copra (dried coconut flesh) for sale to European or Chinese traders, but most of the Australian currency obtained by them and other south Bougainvillians during the thirties was earned with indentured labor on European plantations—and was used for paying official head taxes and for purchases of European tools, cloth, lanterns, kerosene, stick tobacco, and an occasional bag of rice and tin of beef.

Land Use

In all four tribal areas there remained large and virtually unused—and seemingly unneeded—stretches of primary forest. Clearing, however, was very arduous, even with steel tools. In view of the growth stasis of the population during that era, arable areas of secondary growth were

sufficient overall, but because of unequal ownership distribution some of those areas were the object of eager acquisition and of conflicting claims.

Settlement Patterns and Social Units

By the 1930s the colonial authorities had succeeded in persuading—or compelling—the members of all four tribes to build nucleated consolidated “line villages” for purposes of anticipated better hygiene (e.g., keeping pigs away from dwellings) and more efficient administrative control. Notwithstanding, most people continued to reside most of the time as before, in dispersed hamlets consisting of from one to about six families or households each.

Most hamlets of the thirties were also aggregated, socially, into distinct, indigenously defined “communities,” which varied in size from two to about six hamlets each. Contiguity was one factor in creating and maintaining such aggregations, but not the only one. Kinship ties also served to promote community coherence—although some communities contained one or more hamlets unrelated to the others by any such ties, consanguineal or affinal. Indeed, the factor that served most effectively to bind hamlets into socially integrated communities—that is, into units whose members now and then joined together in some *indigenously motivated* collective action—was the presence there of one or two men who initiated and managed such actions. In precolonial times many such actions had to do with fighting; in the 1930s nearly all of them involved feasting.

In many cases there was a fairly close correspondence in membership between indigenous community and Administration line village—although there were some lines that contained two or more communities and some communities whose former constituent hamlets were assigned to separate lines. Also, there were a few hamlets that, although assigned to lines, were unattached socially to any community, except for the kinship ties that some members had with individuals elsewhere.

Communities, as just defined, existed in all four tribes. However, as will be described, there were some salient intertribal differences among communities with respect to how their leaders became such and how they functioned.

Kin Terminology

In most respects all four of our tribes used a set of kin terms that has been labeled “Dravidian”—that is, one that corresponds to a two-sec-

tion marriage system wherein a man's ideal spouse is a woman categorized as his "bilateral cross-cousin" and wherein a male "divides his society into his own [social unit] versus a [social unit] from which he receives a wife and to which he gives a woman from his own [social unit] in a system of direct exchange" (Ogan 1966:179). In reality, except for a few atypical situations, the latter condition did not obtain in any of our four tribes, as will be described. But it is nevertheless interesting, and perhaps significant, that the kin-term system of all four tribes had retained their "Dravidian" characteristic despite divergences that had taken place in other aspects of their cultures. With that said, however, the subject of kin terminology will not be pursued in this essay. The arcane complexities of the subject would require another lengthy essay—which this writer is neither technically nor temperamentally qualified to write!

Religion

Although some beliefs and practices of Christianity had begun to penetrate southern Bougainville by the 1930s, much remained of the aboriginal religions: in tenets that consisted of a pervasive animism, including beliefs about—and appeals to but not worship of—anthropomorphic spirits, both ancestral and nonancestral, and in practices that included divination and magic, both "white" and "black" (i.e., sorcery). Religious specialists abounded, and their services were sometimes paid for, but they only provided such services part-time. Except for funerals (which included cremation), the most common kind of public magical rites were those that sought to benefit individuals in growing up, remaining healthy, and acquiring wealth.

Wealth and Renown

In all four tribes wealth, if properly used, was praiseworthy and was usually sought after and employed to acquire renown, which itself was an important requisite for enhancing one's social influence and political authority. To avoid convoluted debate, I will define "wealth"—arbitrarily and somewhat simplistically but adequate to the purpose of this essay—as an abundance of a people's most highly valued objects (i.e., amounts over and above those perceived to be required for ordinary purposes). Similarly, "renown" will be taken to mean widely expressed social approbation for owning wealth and for using it in certain prescribed ways. In former times "renown" doubtless attended the martial acts of ferocious warriors and men who sponsored and managed suc-

cessful wars, but with the effective outlawing of indigenous warfare, "renown" came to be acquired in other ways, as will be described.⁵

Throughout southern Bougainville "wealth" consisted mainly of an abundance of pigs and shell valuables. First, we will consider pigs—a priority that most Bougainvillians would probably also have acknowledged during the thirties.

In all four of our tribes people doubtless would have liked to eat pork every day—as a highly relished savor for their bland vegetable fare. In a very few households that might have been possible, but I never heard or read of it being done. Even in the wealthiest households such indulgence would have been considered foolishly wasteful. Pigs were meant to serve extrahousehold purposes—to formalize rites of passage, to reward cocytebrants, to pay for services and objects (including even land), to unite allies, to humiliate rivals, and so forth—some of which served the additional function of enhancing the renown of the donor (or purveyor or supplier) and therewith his or her social influence and, possibly, political authority.

The mixed-breed domesticated pigs of the 1930s were valued more highly than the "pure" indigenous breed. The latter were smaller, thinner, tougher—more "razorback"—and embodied much less of the fat that Bougainvillians considered especially delectable. In the thirties most of the indigenous breed were feral and were occasionally hunted—as much for sport as for meat. In contrast, most domesticated pigs of the thirties were products of mixture with European breeds and could grow to large size—some reaching or exceeding a full span (about five feet) in girth.⁶ Usually they were allowed to forage for some of their food, but they had to be fed regularly, with cooked garden produce, to discourage them from breaking into gardens or going feral. When young they were treated as pets, in some households nurtured with humanlike growth magic. In fact, so personal and intimate were their relations with their owners that few of the latter were willing to kill and eat their own pigs—preferring to exchange them for someone else's if pork was needed for their own domestic celebration.

Most average-size households (i.e., a married couple and one to three children) could feed, comfortably, no more than about five adult pigs. To increase the herd beyond that called for more labor—in gardening, cooking, and regularized daily feeding—and that required one or more additional women (such as a second wife, a grown daughter, or a widowed mother). Pigs could also be and sometimes were purchased—which leads to some words about shell valuables.

In the 1930s shell valuables were owned by individuals as well as by social units in all four tribes. They consisted of bits of marine shells pierced and strung on plant-fiber cords usually about one span long. The individual "beads" varied—in variety of shell (and hence in color) and in refinement of manufacture (i.e., in thickness, diameter, and polish). In two of the tribes a string of unrounded bits of mussel shell, the least valuable type, served as the unit of valuation for all others. (For example, in Siwai a span of the smallest and thinnest red beads—one-sixteenth inch in diameter, one-thirtieth inch in thickness—was valued at one hundred or more mussel-shell units.) Virtually all of the shell valuables in the four study populations had been acquired, by trade, from one or another of the nearby AN-speaking peoples (of Shortland or Treasury islands or from Banoni). The four NAN-speaking peoples themselves could have acquired whole shells and made them into beads, but they did not do so. They did, however, occasionally restring them or cut them into shorter lengths—for less "expensive" transactions—or fashion them into necklaces or other ornaments.

Three of the tribes had come to have a distinctive set of shell-bead "denominations"—each with its own, fairly unchanging, relative value. In two of the tribes the same two kinds of uses prevailed: some of the strings served as money (for buying pigs or other objects, for paying for professional services such as sorcery making or divination, for marital transactions, and so forth); others of them served as heirlooms. In three of the tribes the former consisted mainly of the lower-value denominations and were usually owned by individuals, whereas the latter consisted mostly of high-value denominations and were owned, corporately, by groups, whose leaders used them, most typically, as props and ornaments in the groups' ceremonies and occasionally to purchase something for the whole group.

As we shall see, the four tribes differed fairly widely in the amounts of wealth present. They also differed in the specific ways in which individually owned wealth was used for achieving or maintaining social influence and political authority.

Marriage and Matriliny

Finally, it should be recorded at the outset that all four of the tribes engaged in the institution of marriage and that all four of them had some beliefs and practices concerning matriliney. The differences among them respecting those two institutions were so wide that they require lengthy treatment—which I now undertake, beginning with the Siwai

(the tribe with which I was personally familiar and about whose matriline the most information is available).

Siwai

Until about a century ago the people now called Siwai (by themselves and other Bougainvillians) did not conceive of themselves as having any kind of unity except insofar as they shared a mutually understandable language; indeed, for most of them their usual enemies spoke the same language as themselves. Some neighboring peoples speaking other languages called them "Middle (*motuna*) people" and their language "Middle-people talk"—perhaps because of their location between mountains and coast. Formerly, the word "Siwai" was the name of a cape on Bougainville's southern coast, where indigenes from Mono (Treasury Island) established a base for trading with Bougainvillians, especially with the "Middle people." During the 1880s, when European traders used to drop anchor there to barter European goods for copra, "Siwai" came to be applied by those and other outsiders to the whole of the adjacent hinterland, and by extension to the residents as well. Later on, this process of circumscribing and labeling—and conceptually unifying—was completed when males from Siwai went to work on European plantations, where they lived and toiled with indigenes from other areas, whose vernaculars they did not understand and many of whose customs they found to be ridiculously or obnoxiously alien.

In October 1938 the Siwai numbered 4,658 (2,355 males, 2,303 females). Previous censuses indicate that the size and sex ratio of the population had become relatively stable, having gone through the critical initial contact period without suffering the decline experienced by many other native populations in islands farther south and east. The land identified with the Siwai of the 1930s covered about 250 square miles, of which about 80 square miles were habitually used by the Siwai for residential and subsistence purposes, the remainder having been swamp and virgin rain forest (which, however, were used occasionally for hunting and collecting). These figures yield a density of 18 persons per square mile for the whole Siwai territory and 59 persons per square mile for the area habitually used.

In the 1930s the Siwai resided in hamlets consisting of from one to six families or households, and most of those hamlets were clustered, geographically and socially, into communities consisting of two to four or five hamlets each. In addition, all Siwai hamlets, like all other hamlets of south Bougainville, were assigned to one or another Administration-

created line village. Moreover, as elsewhere in south Bougainville, the memberships of lines and indigenous communities tended—but only tended—to correspond.

Although I moved about over most of Siwai and recorded cultural data throughout, the focus of my fieldwork was in the tribe's northeast area, which contained about one-fourth of the total tribal population of 4,658. It was from this study area that I collected most of the property statistics described below; however, by sampling elsewhere I became confident that those figures were not atypical of those for the tribe as a whole.

Wealth and Renown

In the 1930s the principal kinds of wealth throughout Siwai were pigs and shell valuables. In carrying out a property survey of 199 of the 248 households of northeast Siwai I recorded the following information.

Regarding pigs, the total number recorded was 740, worth altogether 15,990 spans of *mauai*—the commonest type of shell valuable, which served as the unit for evaluating all other types of shell valuable and indeed for everything that was bought or sold (e.g., pots, food, weapons, and several kinds of services). The average number of pigs per household was found to be three to four. The range, however, was very wide: 8 of the households had none, 44 only one each, 53 three or four, and several from ten to seventeen. The numbers correlated fairly closely with the number of work-capable household members, especially females, because of the amount of garden produce required to feed pigs enough to keep them domesticated. (For more on the above, see Oliver 1949: paper no. 3.)

Regarding the shell valuables (general name, *pesi*) inventoried in the above survey, I recorded a total amount of about 78,000 *mauai*-units of "currency"—low-value denominations in active circulation—plus about 41,000 *mauai*-units of high-value shell valuables being held as descent-unit heirlooms or being held by individuals and used in certain formal, noncommercial transactions. For currency alone, there was an average of 392 *mauai*-units per household but a range extending from 20 or so, for a few recognizably "poor" households, to a few that owned over 10,000 each. Some individuals also owned high-value denominations—including spans worth 500 to 1,000 *mauai*-units each—but many such valuables served as heirlooms owned corporately by descent units.

In precolonial times each Siwai community was under the leadership

—in some cases weak, in others strong—of either a male *simiri* or a *mumi*. *Simiri* (firstborn) was the title given to the eldest male and female nonsenile members of any matrilineage (see below); the one referred to here was the male firstborn of a community's preponderant matrilineage. A *mumi* was a man who by personal wealth or managerial skill was able to draw together the community's other males to wage intermittent feuds with common foes. (In some cases a community's *mumi* was its leading *simiri* as well.) *Mumis* were not necessarily expert fighters or even tacticians, but they did possess the kinds of economic skills needed to amass or gain access to wealth and enough social skills to use that wealth to attract and keep followers for purposes of peace and war. After fighting was outlawed, most *mumis* and all would-be *mumis* retained (or gained) their renown (with its concomitant local authority and extralocal influence) by giving feasts, a strategy that culminated in competitive largesse matches with rival *mumis* of other communities and one that came to consume the energies and assets of many men (and of their families and loyal supporters as well). A *mumi*'s followers were referred to, generally, as his "children" (*kitoria*) or his "friends/companions" (*pokonopo*).

Every *mumi* and would-be *mumi* owned a clubhouse (*kapaso*) filled as much as space permitted with wooden slit-gongs (the beating of which, on the occasions of feasts, was described as "sounding the *mumi*'s renown"). And in northeastern Siwai every highly successful *mumi* had his own *horomorun*, a demon familiar that dwelt in his clubhouse and protected him from, for example, sorcery attacks launched by envious rivals and other human enemies, and that rendered a clubhouse doubly dangerous to any female who might dare to enter (Oliver 1943).⁷

Marriage

The series of transactions leading up to and formalizing the marriage of previously unmarried females and of previously unmarried and some previously or currently married males included (1) a betrothal "gift" of high-value shell valuables from the groom to the bride, to be owned individually by her; (2) a payment (*pu*, the word also used for purchasing, say, pigs or pots) in ordinary low-value shell currency, from the groom to the bride's father, for use by the latter in purchasing pigs for the wedding feast; and (3) other pigs from the groom for that same feast.

There was no general prescriptive rule for marital residence, and

newly married couples took up residence, usually in their own separate house, in whichever hamlet they chose—their choice influenced by factors of many kinds (for example, the relative wealth and renown of their respective fathers, the relative sizes of their respective matrilineal estates, and so on). Even friendship was a factor in residential choice—that is, friendship between males. In a survey I made of 270 primary marital unions—that is, the first marriage of both spouses—9 of the unions involved couples from the same hamlet; of the rest, 176 were virilocal, 48 uxorilocal, 23 neolocal, and 14 ambilocal (i.e., the couples divided their residing between each one's premarital hamlet). These figures refer to hamlets; when the residential locus pertained to community (i.e., a unified cluster of hamlets), the figures were as follows: virilocality, 101; uxorilocality, 55; neolocality, 3; ambilocality, 14. Ninety-seven of the couples had lived previously in the same community.

Matriliny

The core of most Siwai hamlets was a closely knit segment of one or another of the society's six maximal matrilineal descent units, which I shall now label "clans" (and not "sibs," as I have done in previous publications). Each clan was divided into subclans and matrilineages, but in some cases one or more of a clan's first-order segments (i.e., subclans) were divided into intermediate-order segments (i.e., sub-subclans and so on) before reaching the segmentary level of matrilineages. In addition, in many cases matrilineages were themselves divided into two or more socially and symbolically distinguishable segments, which, following Nash's terminology for the Nagovisi, I will call "minimal lineages."

The differences among Siwai clans with respect to their segmentation structure were due to a number of factors, including dissimilarities in demographics, migration history, and intraunit harmony or conflict—as subsequent examples will reveal.

Nothing could alter a Siwai's born affiliation with the clan of his or her mother. However, some Siwai did transfer clan-segment affiliation. That occurred—although very rarely—when the members of a matrilineage, knowing themselves to be headed for extinction (having among them no more females capable of childbearing), adopted a young and presumably fertile female from a closely collateral matrilineage in order to continue its descent line and to preserve intact its tangible and intangible heirlooms—its land estates, shell valuables, and growing-up magic (*maru*).

The Siwai had a general name, *noroukuru*, for what I label “matrilineal descent unit” but no distinctive generic label for “clan” or for segments of a clan.

Each Siwai clan was specifically named, was normatively exogamous, and was associated with at least one “primary” animal totem. And each clan had one or more versions of its “history.” A résumé of the “histories” of two clans—in part obviously mythical, in part historically credible—will serve to exemplify. First, a condensed and fairly representative version of the origin and dispersal of the *Dagara* (Giant Tree-Rat) clan.⁸

When the land was new and humans had not yet been born, two sister *kupuna* [primal anthropomorphic spirits], Noiha and Korina, dwelt in the middle of the region where the Rugara-speaking people [now called the Buin] now live, at a stream named Sariai. At first they had no kinfolk. They did, however, possess a lot of high-value shell money (*tomui*), which they named *sariai*. They also invented their own *maru*, a distinctive set of ritual actions and props used magically to promote human health and growth and to assist humans in the acquisition of more shell valuables and other kinds of wealth.

In due course the sisters married other *kupuna*, one Hukasa and the other Raimoro, and they accompanied their husbands to northeastern Siwai, close to the location of the present-day line-village of Moronei. Soon after arrival there the elder sister gave birth to a fur-covered creature, which she kept hidden in a cave until a feast could be prepared to accompany the infant’s Washing ceremony (*uharei*).⁹ Accordingly, the infant’s mother bade her husband obtain a pig. When he returned with one that was partly white, his wife refused to accept it and sent him for an entirely black one. That accomplished, she sent him again to obtain an opossum, then some coconuts, and so on until enough food had been collected for the feast. In the course of such work the husband became so weary and so annoyed by what he considered his wife’s unreasonable demands that he cut off his own penis out of spite. Nevertheless, the feast was prepared, and the infant was brought out of Hiding and was about to undergo Washing (with the *maru* invented by his mother and her sister) when it scuttled off to the top of a nearby tree and announced to the amazed onlookers, “I am a giant tree-rat, your sacred (*mikisa*) Tree-Rat; you will endanger your lives if you continue to look at me.” At that the frightened onlookers

fled, leaving behind all the prepared food, including the partly butchered pig (which thereupon turned into a large stone and became a shrine sacred to all Giant Tree-Rat people).

In 1938–1939 some Tree-Rat people occasionally visited the stone, but not even the most Christianized of them ventured close to the nearby cave where the primal Giant Tree-Rat—their primary totem—was said to dwell, because they believed that seeing the creature would expose them to “near-death,” a condition that would eventuate in their own death. And although a Tree-Rat member could look at an ordinary tree-rat with impunity, he or she was forbidden to harm or eat one—because, it was explained, all the latter were descendants of the primal Giant Tree-Rat and hence one of their clanmates. Now to continue the saga of the Tree-Rat people:

From Rotunoua the *kupuna* sisters and their husbands moved to Motuna (between Mataras and Jeku villages). One day their husbands gave them a pig, which they had killed in the forest, and the sisters prepared to cook it. After it was butchered the younger sister, Korina, took the pig’s liver to a creek to wash it, and while she was gone the elder sister, Noiha, selfishly ate all the fat from the pig’s belly. When the younger sister returned and discovered this, she became greatly piqued and vowed never again to eat pig’s belly-fat (*kurommi*). Then they parted, the younger sister going north to Rukruk (near Ukuntu village) and the elder sister staying behind. At Motuna, the place where this episode took place, there is a stone also called Motuna.

The younger sister settled at Rukruk, reared a large family—of human beings, this time—and eventually turned into a stone. Her descendants became known as Belly-fats because they respect the taboo of their ancestress toward this delicacy. Now, if any of these people happen by accident to eat some fat from a pig’s belly, they will become seriously ill unless they perform an antidotal rite. The stone into which the younger sister ossified has a hole in it; this is the vagina of the *kupuna*, and it is claimed that menstrual blood flows from it at regular intervals. Also, whenever a Belly-fat is born, the stone can be heard to moan in pain. Blood will issue from the hole if one pushes a stick into it. . . . This *kupuna* used to use *irisia* leaves to wipe away her menstrual blood, and that is why these leaves are red and why no Tree-Rat person may touch them.

Meanwhile, the elder sister remained around Motuna, gave

birth to several human offspring at a nearby place called Kiaman, and eventually disappeared into a cave there. Her descendants became known as Left-behinds (*Si'nomui*), because their ancestress stayed behind when her younger sister went north. Left-behinds do not taboo pig's belly-fat. Elder sister still inhabits the cave at Kiaman, and Left-behinds are afraid to go there lest they become near-death. If a Left-behind must go to Kiaman to procure some water from the sacred spring there for use in performing *maru*, he (more often, she) can counteract the deadly effects of close contact with this dangerously sacred place by carrying out an antidotal rite. The descendants of the elder sister scattered over all the land between the Mivo and the Mopiai rivers; they were the first to occupy this land, and in those times it all belonged to them. Eventually they divided into these branches [the Siwai use a tree-branching metaphor when explaining this process]: the Kakahaiia, with its center near Mataras village; the Harukamunai, with its center north of Tupopisai and east of the Mivo River, hence in Terei [Buin]; etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.

For a while Rukruk was the only home of the Belly-fats, but later on men from neighboring settlements married Belly-fat women and took them to their own homes. One woman, Monai, moved to Korikuna in central Siwai, and from her descendants several branches developed: the Tumoreku, the Rupommoi, etcetera, etcetera.

With several exceptions members of all these branches preserve the taboo on pig belly-fat. For example, only males of the Rupommoi and Pokuonoku branches need regard the taboo, but a pregnant female member must also avoid eating pig belly-fat because of the possibility that the infant in her womb might be a male. Other branches of this central Siwai line have become established in Banoni and Nagovisi, through women having married and gone to live there.

The branching of the Rukaruinai and the Kukumihnonai from the other Belly-fats took place in the following manner: Long ago two Belly-fat "sisters" used to walk about along the banks of the Kuru creek. The younger sister filled up her carrying basket with coils of the *kukumih* vine, believing it to be money. One day her older sister looked into the basket and, seeing only vine there, exclaimed: "Alas, younger sister, someone has deceived you into thinking that you have lots of money,

when actually all you possess is vine." With this she threw out the vine and gave her younger sister some real high-value shell money and then went to Rukarui to live, leaving the younger sister at the place where the vine was thrown away [*Kukumihno*, "at-the-place-of-the-kukumih-vine"]. The elder sister owned large quantities of high-value shell money, and her descendants became rich and powerful.

From such beginnings as these the Tree-Rat people became numerous and spread throughout the land. The name for all of them is *Ta*. (Based on Oliver 1955:47-49)

Another clan represented numerous throughout Siwai, especially in the northeast, was that of persons whose primary totem was the Hornbill (*huhu*). Their founding ancestress, the *kupuna* Sipikai, first dwelt on some shoals south of the Siwai coast. From there she moved to the coast, married, and gave birth to the first Hornbill, to the first Crocodile, to a female *kupuna* named Uka, and to a male *kupuna* named Nonun:

When Sipikai gave birth to Crocodile, she told her husband to fetch a pig. He found one and brought it to her, but she would not accept it because one of its legs was white. Then the husband brought a solid black one and that was all right. Sipikai then sent her husband after wood to make a bed for Crocodile to lie on. When he brought some wood, she would not accept it because it was too short. Then the husband brought some longer pieces, and she made a bed and placed Crocodile upon it. After this Sipikai wanted to go to the stream to bathe, so she told her husband: "You remain here and guard the Hidden-one [an infant not yet baptized and hence restricted to the house], but do not go inside the house to look at it, for that is forbidden." After Sipikai had left, her husband said to himself: "What sort of infant is this that I should wear myself out working for?" Whereupon he took his ax, went into the house, and hacked it to pieces; then he ran away and hid. When Sipikai returned from the stream and saw what had happened, she wept and joined Crocodile together again. Then she carried it to the river and left it there in the water, telling it: "You must stay here in the river and not go into the forest. Then one day when your father wishes to go to a feast, I shall cause him to decorate himself with red flowers, and when you see a man with red flowers

crossing the river you can kill him.” Later on it happened as Sipikai had said. When Crocodile killed his father, the latter’s companions shouted: “Hey! Crocodile has caught him.” Before this occurred, the crocodile had had no name, but when he killed his father, people called him Crocodile; that became his name. After that it was forbidden for any of Sipikai’s descendants to eat the (red) *kamarao* fish, which formed out of the blood flowing from Crocodile’s wounds.

When Sipikai’s daughter, Uka, became an adult and was walking along the shore, she came across a leaf of the *kinikirisu* palm and another one of the ficus tree. Being curious to see the trees from which these leaves had come, she carried them and walked inland along the banks of the Mopiai River. After searching for a long time, she finally matched the leaves with trees growing on a place called Totokahao. She settled down there, married a *kupuna* named Nohun, and gave birth to five offspring. One of these was a pair of demons joined together at the back. This pair now roves about tracts of land associated with Hornbill people; sometimes it transforms itself into a stone by the name of Hokuho, which is located near Kapana village. Uka’s second offspring was the demon Pakao, which now inhabits the forest around Mataras village and is the most powerful demon there. The third offspring was the female demon Paivo, who used to dwell with Pakao until he killed her. (One day Pakao wanted to kill a flying fox, which was sitting on top of a wild banana flower. Paivo drove away the flying fox to save its life and Pakao killed her in anger. Neighboring *kupuna* were about to cremate her near Mataras, at Pimonna, but Pakao was still angry and drove them west, first to Jeku, then to Kinirui, and finally to Tohu at the extreme western border of Siwai, where they succeeded in cremating her.)

Uka’s two other offspring were female human beings, and from them were descended all the Hornbill people. The elder of these two sisters gave birth and had a pig slaughtered for a feast to accompany the infant’s baptismal ritual. She then sent her younger sister to the stream to fetch drinking water, and while her sister was gone, she ate all the pig. When the younger sister returned and discovered how she had been deceived, she wept and vowed never to eat pig again. She kept on weeping at the thought of never again eating pig, until she conceived of the idea of performing a Climbing ceremony (*kinamo*) to remove

the taboo on eating pork. She constructed a high platform, climbed to the top of it, and ate some pork while repeating a magic formula (*korona*), and this removed the taboo. She carried out this Climbing at a place called Pookai, east of Konga; this was the first Climbing, and it was invented by this ancestress of the Hornbill people. (Members of other clans followed her example and adopted Climbing as a means of removing taboos that are not too strong. Since that time many other Hornbills must taboo eating pork until they have performed Climbing.) After the younger sister had performed Climbing, she set out in search of canarium almonds, and, having discovered some at Paramoni and at Rukarui, she settled down there, eventually turning into the stone Paramoni.

As noted earlier, stories about clan origins had several versions. For example, in another one about the Hornbills their founding ancestress, Sipikai, lived originally in Nagovisi rather than on shoals south of the Siwai coast. Nevertheless, most of the several versions of each clan's myth were alike with respect to the kinds of incidents having to do with its totemic affiliations and with the causes and order of its branching.

The mythical accounts of branching reveal not only the imaginative inventiveness of Siwai cosmogonizing, but also the streak of humor that enlivened this and other expressions of their thought—such as, for example, an episode in the saga of the Eagle people (*Moŋko*), who originated at a place on the beach near Hiruhiru, called Mitahu.

From Mitahu several Eagle *kupuna* sisters went to central Siwai and had a feast at the stone named Nukui. Instead of a pig they butchered and cooked a frog. One *kupuna* ate the head (*puri*) of the frog and settled down near Kupingku village; her descendants became known as Head people (*Purinnai*). Another *kupuna* ate the middle of the frog and settled down near the present villages of Sikurai, Kontai, and Kinirui; her descendants became known as the Middle people (*Motunoŋ*). The third *kupuna* ate the legs and settled at Hari village; her descendants became the Legs people (*Hipanopo*). A fourth *kupuna* took one look at the roasted frog and became afraid and ran away; she settled at Tokunotu, and her descendants are the Runaways (*Morunoŋ*: I ran away). Since *morokiŋ* (flying fox) sounds much like *morunoŋ*, the Runaways decided to taboo flying foxes in addition to their original totems of eagles and frig-

ate birds (*kerai*). Another *kupuna* had never seen a roasted frog before and asked: "What is it called (*ua toqunom*)?" She settled in eastern Siwai and in Terei [Buin], and her descendants are known as the What-is-it-called people (*Toquno*). Another *kupuna* arrived after the frog had been eaten and complained: "If I had only been here (*nukui*)!" She remained weeping at the site of the feast, and her descendants settled there, becoming known as the If-I-had-been-here people (*Nukui*). The *kupuna* who arrived last of all at the feast got nothing and went to live at Korikunu and Kaparo. Her descendants are known as the Late-arrivals (*Romotaku*, since-she-arrived-afterwards). Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.

Each of the six exogamous clans represented in Siwai in 1938–1939 was identified mainly by its principal totem, Tree-Rat, Hornbill, Parrot, Crane, Eagle, or Kingfisher. And although no two clan cosmogonies were alike in narrative content, they all resembled one another closely with respect to certain of their themes (and with the practices associated with them during 1938–1939). The most significant of those themes were as follows:

1. Each *kupuna* ancestress gave birth to certain demons, human beings, and animal archetypes, thereby linking them by special (i.e., totemic) ties.

2. Although the *kupunas* withdrew from mundane living, most of them remained near the scenes of their earthly activities, in the form of stone-demons or bush-demons; and in such transformations they were more dangerous than beneficent to their human descendants.

3. Primary totems—that is, descendants of the animal archetype siblings—require kindly treatment. Above all they must not be eaten by their human relatives; anyone breaking this taboo invites certain, automatic death, there being no magic antidote to save him or her.

4. Secondary totems—those acquired by other than genealogical means—are not as stringently protected from eating or handling.

5. The *kupunas* of several separate clans independently invented (a) a sacramental ceremony (Climbing) for the express purpose of lifting secondary totemic taboos and (b) magical rites (*maru*) to insure the health, growth, and well-being of clan members.

6. The *kupunas* of several clans also discovered and acquired sacred hoards of high-value shell money (*tomui*, *pata*), which they passed on to their human descendants, mainly for use in ceremonies.

7. During their wanderings around Siwai the *kupunas* tarried at cer-

tain places long enough to consecrate them in some manner; for example, at some of these shrines (*urinno*) the *kupunas* deposited sacred water from their homes for use in connection with clan ceremonies, while others were consecrated through the continued presence of the *kupunas* in the form of stone-demons or bush-demons. These shrines are dangerously sacred (*mikisa*) to associated clan members, who may safely visit them only on certain occasions.

8. All the myths relate how the "scattering" of the *kupunas* and their early human descendants resulted in the fission of the clans. Conversely, the myths of some clans contain implications that parts of certain clans became linked with parts of others (see below and Oliver 1955:59–60).

I shift focus now to the social aspect of Siwai clans—to their composition and subdivisions, and to their members' shared rights and duties. The case of the Tree-Rat clan can exemplify those matters.

In dogma shared by all Tree-Rat people (and known to many other non-Tree-Rat Siwai), all living persons believed to be descended matrilineally from one or the other of the two *kupuna* sisters, Noiha and Korina, were members of the same clan. As such they were forbidden to harm or eat any ordinary tree-rat, owing to the circumstance that all of them were descendants of the primal Giant Tree-Rat, who was, like their own human ancestress, an offspring of one of the two ancestral *kupuna* sisters. Should any member of the clan kill or eat a tree-rat, even unwittingly, retribution would occur swiftly and automatically in the form of death, there being no effective antidote or penance.

Neither Noiha nor Korina (nor the primal Tree-Rat) was worshiped or prayed to, although all Tree-Rat members regarded the large stones at Rotunoua and Motuna to be associated with their "history" and as such to be "sacred" (*mikisa*) to themselves. Another exclusive possession of the Tree-Rat people as a whole was their *maru*, the distinctive combination of magical words and nonverbal actions believed to have been invented by their *kupuna* ancestresses that was performed by one of themselves on a fellow clan member to promote the latter's health and well-being—the performers usually being elderly, practiced female members of the subject's own matrilineage subdivision of the clan (see below). One ingredient of Tree-Rat *maru* (and of the *maru* of most other clans) was water taken from a spring or stream near a clan *urinno*, some place made "sacred" by one of its *kupuna* ancestresses. And although water from any of the clan's several *urinno* would have served the purpose, that used in a *maru* rite was usually taken from one more-narrowly associated with the subject's and the performer's subdivision of the clan.

A somewhat different position was occupied by the heirloom shell money (*tomui*) possessed by each matrilineage subdivision of the Tree-Rat clan. Although all such *tomui* of all Tree-Rat matrilineages was said to have been discovered by the ancestral *kupuna* sisters at their original home, the separate stores of it still extant in 1938–1939 were the exclusive properties of separate matrilineages and were not even lent out among them for any purpose, ritual or otherwise.

Less significant was the dogma, asserted by many Tree-Rat people, that all fellow members had the same pattern of lines on the palms of their hands. However, when contrary evidence was pointed out to one of them, the usual reaction was, "Things are not always as should be."

Like the membership of all other Siwai clans, the Tree-Rats addressed one another as *imo* (my-clanmate) when a more specific kin term was not appropriate or known. Moreover, my questions concerning the kind of relationship that prevailed among *imo* invariably prompted pious statements about mutual affection and cooperation—even though my informants knew, and knew that I knew, of countless cases of feud and murder among *imo* in former years and of political rivalries and personal enmities, including the use of sorcery, among them in 1938–1939. And again, acknowledgment of such realities was usually shrugged off with, "Things are not always as should be." Indeed, the only occasion on which Tree-Rat members per se acted in concert was at Climbing ceremonies, when all those Tree-Rats present tended to ascend the platform at the same time, no matter how distant their residences and ties of clanship.

In fact, despite all the verbal expressions of unity, the most—almost the only—significant social-relational aspect of common clan membership, among Tree-Rats as well as among members of other Siwai clans, was the rule that clanmates should not engage in sexual acts with one another. And although casual sexual affairs reportedly did take place between distant clanmates—always in "distant settlements"—they never resulted in publicly sanctioned marriage. The social condemnation attending even casual affairs was reinforced by the belief that both of the sinners would be killed by their clan spirits unless they promptly performed antidotal rites. In some well-known cases the deaths of the unrepentant principals did not take place for several years, but when they did finally die the common judgment was that their incestuous acts (*mo'oturu*) had caught up with them in the end. (The rule against sexual intercourse between members of the same clan extended in some cases to members of different clans as well—as will be described below.)

By 1938–1939 many Siwai, mostly young males, had been to places

far beyond the borders of Siwai—a few to Christian mission schools but most to European plantations. Some returnees reported to me that they had met up with “clanmates” even from different language regions—Bougainvillians who respected the same totemic animal or possessed identical palm lines. However, I was unable to discover evidence of any regularized interaction resulting from such recognition other than an inclination for friendship—and statements to the effect that one should not engage in sex acts with a “sister” of such a “clanmate.”

I turn now to subdivisions of Siwai clans, and again use as reference the case of the Tree-Rat people. As was reported above, the first (mythical) subdivision of the Tree-Rats took place at Motuna, where Noiha, the elder of the *kupuna* sisters, provoked the physical separation from her younger sister, Korina, by her selfish action of devouring all of the belly-fat delicacy of a pig intended for both of them. Korina (the story goes) thereupon moved to Rukruk, mothered a number of humans, proscribed the eating of pig belly-fat by herself and by all her matrilineal descendants until the performance of an antidotal rite, and eventually turned into a sacred stone. Meanwhile, her greedy sister, Noiha, remained in the vicinity of Motuna and herself mothered a number of humans, thereby founding a geographically separate matriline.

In 1938–1939 the separate matrilines founded (mythically) by Noiha and Korina were known, respectively, as Left-behinds (because they had remained behind when Korina moved away) and Belly-fats (because of their proscription on eating that delicacy). Using English-language logic, we can call each of them a subclan; the Siwai made no generic verbal distinction between a whole clan and its subdivisions, the word *noroukuru* having been applied to them all. Moreover, in the case of the Tree-Rats, although a distinction was made between the two subclans in terms of the eating or not eating of pig belly-fat, there were no other social practices to differentiate them. Neither subclan per se assembled on social or religious occasions. Individually, the members of each subclan expressed more or less exclusive association with their own shared shrine place—Kiaman in the case of the Left-behinds, Rukruk in the case of the Belly-fats—but they did not share distinctive ownership in any other land, in shell valuables, or in *maru*. Moreover, neither subclan's membership indicated to me any sentiment about ties of subclanship being friendlier or sexual avoidances stricter than in the case of clanship in general.

Reverting to the Tree-Rat people's stories about their pasts, I am unable to judge which of the episodes marked the transition from their myths—either transmitted in ancient times or recently invented—to

plausible historical facts. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that at various points in those pasts some members resided long enough in specific places to establish territorial claims, either by pioneer settlement or by forceful seizure—claims that in 1938–1939 were deemed valid by most of their neighbors.

But let us return to the Tree-Rat myths cum history. The subclan of the Belly-fats was to become more widely ramified than that of the Left-behinds and hence will better serve the purpose of providing an illustration of how the Siwai conceptualized the mythological-historical past.

After parting from her selfish older sister, the *kupuna* Korina settled down at a place called Rukruk and gave birth to several humans. In time men from nearby hamlets (such as Rukarui, Tumuroku, and others) married Rukruk Belly-fat women and took them to their homes, where after a few generations the Belly-fats in each of those hamlets constituted a separate sub-subclan, each with its own shrine, (slightly distinctive) *maru*, and shell heirlooms, and in some cases with eating prohibitions of their own. After a while women from those sub-subclans moved to other places, where they founded (with apologies to the reader!) sub-sub-subclans—and so on.

In 1938–1939 the near end-products of all that ramifying were scores of locality-centered matrilineages—so labeled (in keeping with conventional anthropological terminology) because of the circumstance that their more knowledgeable members could trace their common matrilineal descent from a specific, historically credible, and individually named ancestress (or pair of sibling ancestresses) who in most cases was (or were) no more than four or five generations antecedent to a unit's oldest living members. Each such matrilineage was corporate, in the sense that its members shared ownership of a collection of shell heirlooms and one or more tracts of land. The heirlooms were used to decorate members on solemn occasions, to purchase pigs for a member's funerary feast, and—a few shell beads at a time—to farewell a member's corpse during cremation. Such heirlooms were usually identified as being part of the original Tree-Rat hoard, and the rule was that, at the approach of death of a unit's last surviving member, they should be buried in a hidden place rather than transferred to some other individual or social unit—not even a collateral matrilineage.

As for the land, every Tree-Rat matrilineage I knew about owned exclusively, in full title, several tracts of land. In many cases members permitted others to garden on their lands for limited periods (e.g., during the planting, growing, and harvesting of one root crop) and occa-

sionally for “rent”; in other cases a matrilineage’s members both owned and exclusively used such land themselves. (Henceforth in this essay the former type of ownership will be labeled *residual*, the latter *full*.) Unlike its shell heirlooms, however, the ownership of a matrilineage’s land was sometimes transferred, “permanently,” to another individual or matrilineage—usually in connection with a member’s death. Thus, when a person died, it was obligatory for his or her matrilineage mates to recompense with a pork feast all other persons who had attended the cremation. When the deceased’s matrilineage mates had to call on outsiders for help in obtaining enough pigs, the deceased’s spouse was usually the first to be solicited, but contributions from anyone were acceptable. Moreover, in return for substantial amounts of such help, it was customary for the contributor to be given full title to one or more tracts of the deceased’s matrilineage land—which, in most but not all cases, were eventually incorporated in the contributor’s matrilineage estate.

Mention was made earlier of clan shrines—places and objects, such as noteworthy stones—associated exclusively with (i.e., owned by) whole clans (or subclans, sub-subclans, and so on). Some matrilineages also owned a shrine or two of their own, but in most cases their times of branching had been too recent (i.e., four or five generations) to encourage conceptualization of that aspect of their corporate unity. That was the case, for example, of the several matrilineages that had branched from the Rukarui division of the Belly-fats subclan and whose members continued to use spring water from the Rukarui (subclan) shrine in conducting their own rites of *maru*.

Their use of the shrine did not, however, serve to acknowledge any kind of “seniority” to the (collateral) Rukarui matrilineage owning the tract of land on which the shrine was located. In fact, although some authority was attributed to age seniority among same-sex siblings and to Firstborns by their younger matrilineage mates (see below), such ranking did not carry over to relations among segments of a clan. For example, among Tree-Rat people, members of the Left-behind subclan (descendants of elder sister Noiha) were not privileged over those of the Belly-fat subclan (descendants of younger sister Korina), nor among the latter was there any seniority-based hierarchical distinction made between matrilineages of the same sub-subclan.

Seniority did, however, serve to regulate social role among members of the same matrilineage. Every matrilineage included a pair of Firstborns (*simiri*), conventionally the unit’s chronologically oldest still mentally competent female and male members. It was the responsibility of the female Firstborn to guard the unit’s heirloom shell valuables and to

dole them out among members for use on ritual occasions. And it was the responsibility of both of a matrilineage's Firstborns, male and female, to decide on the use or disposal of their matrilineage's land—its temporary use among matrilineage mates as well as outsiders and its alienation to outsiders. In communities dominated numerically by a single matrilineage, its Firstborns and especially its male Firstborn tended to have authority over other community affairs as well, provided there was not a more prominent *mumi* (big-man leader) there—either a younger member of the dominant matrilineage or a member of some other matrilineage localized there. (As noted earlier, in some communities the most influential male Firstborn was the most renowned *mumi* as well.)

I wrote above that in 1938–1939 matrilineages were “near” end-products of clan ramification; in the case of some of them, that process had proceeded one step further, to the formation of sub- or minimal matrilineages, namely, units consisting of two or three generations of members related to one another through known uterine ties. Although such units had not (yet) become set apart by a separate name, their members often acted together as a separate group on everyday as well as special occasions, and some of them shared corporately and well-nigh exclusively in the full or residual ownership of tracts of land. (As for what would happen to such land in the event of the demise of all its minimal-matrilineage owners, I did not pursue that question systematically, but in the three cases I heard about, such land had passed on to the offspring of their male members and thence to *their* matrilineages, rather than “reverting” to the encompassing matrilineages of the original owners.)

Among the eleven hundred or so inhabitants of northeast Siwai (the area of my most intensive fieldwork), matrilineages varied in span from one to four or five matrilineages and in size from one to about thirty members—the modal sizes having been twelve to twenty. They also varied, in some cases widely, in depth. As mentioned earlier, the depth of most of them was four or five generations above the oldest living members, but there were several cases in which the unit was said to have been “founded” (as a separate, named, corporate, and communally functioning unit) by an elderly woman or a pair of elderly sisters still alive. And there were a few others that traced their namable ascendants through single matrilineages (i.e., without remembered collateral lines) through nine or ten generations. In other words, although (for example) most Tree-Rat matrilineages I knew about were at least sub-sub-subclans, there were two that were sub-subclans. (Unfortunately for the tidy-

minded ethnographer, the structural symmetry envisaged in taxonomic terminology does not always correspond to social reality.)

Having delineated the complexities of Siwai clan *fission*, I must add some words about that tribe's processes of clan *fusion*. In my inquiries about clan exogamy in northeast Siwai, I came across several instances wherein marriage was declared to be prohibited between persons belonging to different clans. Three kinds of explanation were offered for this unusual phenomenon: (1) "Formerly our *noroukuru* (clan or clan segment) used to be the same"; (2) "We both taboo the same totem"; and (3) "One of our male ancestors 'bound' us together."

Exemplifying the first explanation was the rule that Hornbills should not marry Tree-Rats, Cranes, or members of the Eye-roller subclan of the Kingfisher clan. The only reason given for those prohibitions was, "Formerly we used to be the same *noroukuru*." None of the clans or clan segments subject to those prohibitions shared totems, not even secondary ones; and even my most inventive informants could not, or would not, go beyond that general explanation.

The second kind of explanation is more easily comprehended in terms of Siwai logic, even though the totems shared in most cases happened to be the primary one for one of the units and a secondary one for the other.

The third kind of explanation derived from the concept of *nokihoro*, which meant "agglomeration"—"to place unlike things together" (for example, yams with taro, a knife with an adze, or, in this context, women belonging to different clans). Thus, when a man had had two wives, either simultaneously or serially (say, one a Tree-Rat, the other an Eagle), their respective offspring were considered half-siblings—or, in Siwai terms, "siblings by *nokihoro*"—and were forbidden to marry one another. In most such situations that I recorded, the prohibition applied only to the direct matrilineal descendants of the "agglomerated" wives, but there were cases in which it had been extended to include whole subclans, sub-subclans, and so on. In general, it was my impression that the evoking of a *nokihoro* relationship (with its corollary marriage restriction) was somewhat inconsistent and subject to circumstance. For example, it was sometimes loudly advertised if a man wanted to assert a closer kin tie with a prominent *mumi* and sometimes ignored if a man wished to marry a particular "agglomerated" woman.

Two other types of interclan relationship require mention. First, in the northwestern part of Siwai, members of the numerically preponderant Eagle clan were permitted to marry members of any of the five other clans, while the latter could only marry Eagles. The only explana-

tion I could elicit about this arrangement was that the five non-Eagle clans “used to be the same *noroukuru*”—no explanation having been forthcoming about how they had separated.¹⁰

The second type of relationship occurred in many pockets throughout Siwai. Reference here is to places where members of two neighboring clans had been intermarrying almost exclusively for so many generations that the practice had come to be regarded as strongly preferential, virtually prescriptive. The explanation usually given for the practice was that “it keeps lands and valuables together” (i.e., in terms both of nuptial transactions and of inheritance). To the best of my knowledge, however, nowhere did the practice involve an omission of bride-price or a direct woman-for-woman exchange (which all the Siwai I discussed the matter with considered to be highly immoral).

Finally, it must be added that, alongside the Siwai’s pervasive matrilineally structured institutions, there were signs of incipient patriliney. Mention was made earlier of the practice whereby nonmembers were enabled to acquire ownership of some of a matrilineage’s land by contributing pigs or pig-purchasing money—“gifts” labeled *nori*—to help its members provide an adequate funeral feast for a deceased matrilineage mate. I recorded several cases in which the major contributors to a man’s funeral feast had been his wife and children, who used pigs or money in which the deceased himself had owned no share. In most of those cases the land thus acquired was simply added to the contributors’ own matrilineage estates. But in a few of them, when the *nori* had belonged mainly to the deceased’s son(s), the latter had transmitted the acquired land to his own son, rather than to his matrilineage, and so on, thereby founding an incipient patrilineage. During my stay in Siwai there existed several such units, three or four generations deep, all of which owned, corporately, distinct estates in land, and a few of which owned shell heirlooms as well. However, none that I knew of had conceptualized its unity and separateness to the extent of having its own shrine or *maru* or totemic emblem, and none had ruled itself to be exogamous. Nor did any of them ascribe authority over the unit’s resources to its oldest members as such; short of senility, elderliness was respected in this as in other Siwai institutional contexts, but leadership in “patrilineage” affairs tended to rest with the unit’s most renowned male rather than with its age-based equivalent of a matrilineage First-born.

With that we can conclude our résumé of Siwai descent and descent-

like units. Readers wishing more details are referred to *A Solomon Island Society* (Oliver 1955), but enough has been provided in the above pages to serve for comparison with the descent and descentlike units of the Nagovisi, to which I now turn.

Nagovisi

For centuries and probably much longer, people speaking what has come to be called Sibbe have resided on the southwestern slopes of Bougainville's Crown Prince Range. Directly north of the slopes is a wide, stream-laced, swampy, and virtually uninhabited area that separated them effectively from the linguistically only very distantly related Eivo. East of them resided the Nasioi, whose language was closely related to their own but with whom they seem to have had few contacts during the decades just prior to the 1930s—perhaps because of the high mountainous terrain that separates them. The area directly east of the Nagovisi's southern settlements consisted of a large block of uninhabited mountainous terrain, but some of their southern settlements, located in an area of gentler slopes and plains, were adjacent to those of the Baitsi, who spoke a dialectical variant of Siwai. The Nagovisi's westernmost residences were adjacent to some inland settlements of the otherwise coastal, Austronesian-speaking Banoni, who, however, were relatively recent migrants to the region and who will not figure directly in this comparison.

The earliest, very rough count, made in 1929, put the number of Nagovisi at "about 2000." A more careful count, made in 1938, showed them to number 3,516—plus a reportedly uncounted number of "the very old and the very young." Given the uncertainties surrounding the 1929 figure, it is not possible to know whether the large difference between it and the 1938 figure was based on a sizable underestimation of the earlier count or represented an actual and very accelerated increase. My guess is the former; aside from the cessation of lethal feuding (which seems to have been arrested between 1929 and 1938), no other changes—such as significantly better medical care or the abolition of postpartum sex constraints—could have taken place during that decade to account for such a rapid population increase.¹¹

Estimating, very roughly, the area of land used by or claimed by the Nagovisi in 1938 to have been about 80 square miles would yield a population density of about 44 persons per square mile. For the area studied by Nash and Mitchell, in 1969–1973, the population density was consid-

erably higher. By that time, however, the per-person need for land had increased significantly through cash cropping.

During the century or so before World War I, the Nagovisi's contacts with their close linguistic relatives the Nasioi seem to have been less numerous than those with the neighboring Siwai. In fact, many Siwai had migrated into and become "Nagovisi"—a movement that seems to have been two-way. Also, it was through Siwai and to a lesser degree Banoni that European influences first reached Nagovisi, beginning with steel tools in the 1880s.

Nagovisi men began to work on European plantations—on Manus, New Britain, and the eastern coast of Bougainville—about twenty years later, but it was not until 1930 that a European—a Roman Catholic priest—established residence in Nagovisi itself. The 1930s also witnessed the beginning of periodic visits by (Australian) Administration officials; these succeeded in suppressing what remained of lethal feuding and in encouraging men to leave home to work. A permanent Administration post was first established in Nagovisi after World War II, and a vehicular road linking the area with the island's main administrative and commercial center of Arawa-Kieta was completed only in 1973.

The field studies on which this résumé is based were focused on communities in central Nagovisi. And although their 435 or so residents constituted only about 14 percent of Nagovisi's total population at the time, their social institutions seem not to have differed markedly from those of the rest of their language mates—Nagovisi having been somewhat more homogeneous, culturally, than Siwai, Buin, or Nasioi.

The Nagovisi's pattern of residential settlement underwent some radical changes immediately before, during, and immediately after World War II, but by the period from 1969 to 1973 (when the Nash-Mitchell field studies took place) they had begun to revert to the precolonial pattern, which consisted of one- to five-household hamlets, which in turn were combined into communities containing several hamlets each.

In my introduction to this essay, I noted that "communities" existed in all four study populations but added that there were differences among the four in the kind and organization of their respective activities. I can describe with some certainty what members qua members of Siwai and Buin communities did and how they were organized. I am, however, less certain about the communities of the Nagovisi (and of the Nasioi). Regarding Nagovisi, which I visited in 1938, but only for a one-month stay:

To me, coming to this area from [Siwai], the most striking aspect of Nagovisi culture was the extremely rudimentary form of the political institutions [i.e., community leadership]. Club-houses (*sibbe*, *raopai* (singular) = *motuna*, *ka·poso*) are fewer and smaller, with at most two or three slit-gongs, the rest of the space being taken up with benches. Club-houses are not limited to men [as they are in Siwai]; women have a perfect right to visit them. This state of affairs was a shock to my [Siwai] servants.

Feasts are said to be held much less frequently, to be a great deal less lavish, and to attract fewer people than in northeast [Siwai]. Leaders are called *mu·miako* [correctly, *moniako*] (cf. *motuna*, *mu·mi*); but one of my informants who had married and lived for a while in [Siwai] assured me that there were no really big feast-giving leaders in Nagovisi. Such *mu·miako* that were pointed out to me were usually venerable old men far past their prime and who were described as being: “the *mu·miako* of such-and-such a moiety” rather than—as in northeast [Siwai]—“the *mu·mi* of such-and-such a place.”

The unimportance of political institutions is in direct contrast to the [Nagovisi's greater] emphasis upon kinship relationships and activities. (Oliver 1943:57–58)

Other clues to the nature of Nagovisi communities, as they were in the 1930s, are found in writings by Nash and Mitchell about *moniako*, which will be quoted below.

Wealth and Renown

As elsewhere in southern Bougainville, wealth consisted mainly of pigs and shell valuables. Pork was seldom if ever eaten at ordinary meals but was indispensable for festive ones. Moreover, pigs were the principal tokens used in several kinds of transactions, but the only statistical data I can find regarding Nagovisi pig ownership are given by Mitchell, who states that, in 1973, “many of the young couples will want to raise one or more pigs” (1976:135), and that among the seventeen households (containing a total of ninety persons) he surveyed for that purpose, four had no pigs and the remaining thirteen owned pigs weighing a total of 975 kg (1976:137). Assuming the average weight of a 1973 pig to be about 30 kg,¹² there would have been about thirty-two pigs, an average

of two for each household or about 0.35 per person (compared with the equivalent Siwai figure of 0.82). These figures are of little use in reconstructing the pig population in the 1930s, but it is the only clue known to me. In all likelihood the average sizes of pigs were smaller in the 1930s than in 1973; during that earlier era the proportion of introduced European varieties was probably much smaller.

Mitchell, writing about conditions in 1973, stated: "Pigs are said to belong to women, but men have a good deal to say regarding their acquisition or sale" (1976:35). According to Nash, writing about the same period: "Ideally, the pattern of inheritance . . . is a transfer from mother to eldest daughter. This is the route for currency-type shell valuables and usage rights to individual parcels of land [and] trees. . . . A woman's livestock (pigs, chickens) are not inherited *per se* but instead may be slaughtered and eaten at . . . funerary feasts" (1974:27).

Based on information obtained during my one-month visit to Nagovisi in 1939, I wrote, "In comparison with [Siwai] there are far fewer pigs and less shell money [i.e., shell valuables in general], in fact, the Nagovisi seem to be poorer in almost every department of material culture" (Oliver 1943:27)—not exactly "deep" ethnography (and certainly not adequate for present purposes)! So again I must draw on information obtained by Nash and Mitchell in 1973, relying on the hopeful and not unreasonable assumption that in this and in certain other domains of Nagovisi culture conditions had not greatly changed since the thirties.

In 1973 *viasi*, shell valuables, consisted of span-long strings of beads made of various varieties of marine shells obtained by the Nagovisi by trade with the neighboring AN-speaking Banoni and the neighboring NAN-speaking Siwai (who obtained most of theirs from AN-speaking Shortland and Treasury islanders). The strings varied in accepted value according to the type, size, and color of their shell beads; there were in fact eight "denominations" of them in 1973.¹³ Shell valuables also differed in function—some of them having been in common use as currency (e.g., for buying pigs and paying fines). Such currency-type strings were also used for marital transactions: in 1973 for bride-price; in the thirties for dowry. Currency-type *viasi* was usually owned by individuals, mostly by women, and was customarily inherited by the owner's daughters, in order of seniority.

Other types of shell valuables served as descent-unit heirlooms (*wolupia*), having been used in descent-unit rituals and to ornament descent-

unit members. *Wolupia* did not ordinarily circulate beyond its owning descent unit. Moreover, some *wolupia* was believed to be imbued with a soul and to have magical "strength."

Concerning the distribution of *viasi*, the only estimate available for the thirties is my impressionistic one quoted above, namely, "less shell money than in [Siwai]." As for 1973, we have statements by Nash and Mitchell to the effect that individuals differed in their currency assets—from "none" to "many"—and that descent units ranged in *wolupia* holdings from "rich" to "poor."

Marriage

Nagovisi customs concerning marriage differed in two respects from those of Siwai (and of Nasioi and Buin). The first had to do with post-marriage residence:

Information on residence of couples whose marriages were contracted before World War II shows that about half of all couples were residing uxori locally, and the rest were divided between virilocal and alternating residence. The latter form of residence can be defined as occurring when a couple either maintained two houses at any given time—usually, one virilocally and the other uxori locally situated—or when during their marriage they lived uxori locally for a period of years, then virilocally for a period, again uxori locally for a third period, and so on. The former sort of alternating residence was practised by Big-men [*moniako*] and the well-to-do and influential in particular, but not exclusively by them. The latter sort of alternating residence was frequently observed by couples whose descent groups owned adjacent plots of land. All those who practised alternating residence appeared to have moved around as circumstances provided or required, e.g., to plan and carry out feasts, because of arguments, fear of sorcery, etc. (Nash 1974:83)

More specifically, in a survey carried out in the Nash-Mitchell study area, it was found that of twenty-nine couples who had married between 1910 and 1943, seven had resided virilocally, thirteen uxori locally, and eight alternately—while one couple had remained in their common premarriage place (Nash 1974:85).¹⁴ Since the "traditional" type of residential settlement was a hamlet, and one usually located on

land owned by the descent unit to which its resident female members belonged, I assume that the locus referred to in Nash's statements was the hamlet (and not the household, the larger "community," or the Administration-created line village).

The second distinctive feature of Nagovisi marriages had to do with their formalizing prestations—again, I draw on Nash:

Today the Nagovisi always pay brideprice (*wolina*, 'payment in general'). However, according to informants, this was not the case traditionally. In the past, an optional dowry (*lolai*) was paid. The statements of my informants are corroborated by H. Thurnwald's information (1938). Indeed, the same rationalization for dowry was given by my informants as [Thurnwald] reports: the purpose of the dowry was to 'buy' the strength of the man—to buy a 'strong hand' to work in the gardens. . . .

Traditionally the mother of the bride (or other ranking females in the lineage or clan) paid a dowry of one or two or even three—according to [H.] Thurnwald (1938)—strands of shell valuables to the mother of the groom or to his clan or lineage. Such payment was called *lolai*. Only the well-to-do were able to make such payments, because the Nagovisi say that in the past not everyone had shell valuables. Sometimes, in addition, the mother of the bride and the mother of the groom would exchange identical strands of shell [i.e., identical in size of shell, in color, and so on—in other words, in denomination]. Such exchanges were identical exchanges and were made to promote goodwill between those exchanging them. The family of the groom in some cases made a return of pigs, which were eaten at the bridal feast or perhaps at a later date. The gift of pigs was called *lolai nogokas* ('return for *lolai*'). *Lolai nogokas* was not always made, nor was it really considered equal to the *lolai*. It did not cancel out the exchanging relation, because the *lolai* was to 'buy' the physical labour of the groom, not the pigs. (Nash 1974:93)

The rationalization of dowry as "buying the strength of the man" reflected the circumstance that in most cases the husband moved to his wife's place—to her hamlet and descent-unit land—and thenceforth devoted most of his productive labor to providing food for her and her descent-unit mates (including his own children by her). Even when a

couple resided at the husband's hamlet, he was expected to devote most of his labor to the welfare of his wife and children and not to that of his sisters and their children (who were members of the man's own descent unit).¹⁵

Matriliny

The enduring core of each hamlet was a closely knit segment of one or another of the Nagovisi's several exogamous matrilineal clans, which were themselves grouped into one or the other of two exogamous categories of kin, or moieties. An individual belonged to the descent unit—clan, and therefore moiety—of his or her mother, and nothing could alter that affiliation.

Unlike the Siwai, the Nagovisi had no generic word for “descent unit” in general. Their language did, however, contain terms that, according to Nash, might be glossed “descent group of indefinite range,” as, for example, *nigonmpo* (my group), *lekompō* (thy group), *wakampō* (his/her group) (1974:20).

In the case of the moieties, each was usually referred to by the name of its principal totem, one being Hornbill, the other Eagle. According to Nash, the members of each moiety

are geographically dispersed throughout Nagovisi and have no common ground or shrines. Members of each moiety refrain . . . from eating or touching their respective totems on pain of illness (specifically, sores, shortness of breath, or wasting away). They consider themselves to have distinctive palm lines, Hornbills having three and Eagles having either two or four. Both sexual relations and marriage between members of the same moiety are forbidden; informants claimed that formerly offenders would be summarily killed by their own horrified moiety mates. . . . All or most members of one moiety never assemble or act in concert. Although they verbally prescribe an ethic of hospitality and brotherhood towards one another, it seems that traditionally, enemies might frequently be members of one's own moiety who belonged to geographically remote clans. (Nash 1974: 22–23)

Again according to Nash, in the 1970s the following symbols were associated with Nagovisi moieties:

	<u>Moiety A</u>	<u>Moiety B</u>
Bird	<i>Komo</i> (Hornbill)	<i>Mangka</i> (Eagle)
Spirit ancestress	Poreu	Makonai
Her offspring	<i>Langala</i> (<i>Uromys</i> <i>ponceleti</i> , Giant Tree-Rat) <i>Barama</i> (Eel) <i>Aiwa</i> (a vine)	<i>Paramorung</i> (<i>Boiga</i> <i>irregularis</i> , Brown Tree-Snake)
Other animals	Kingfisher	Mynah bird Crocodile

Nash's commentary on the above "moiety symbols" is presented not in her 1974 publication (which focused on other matters) but in her unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, from which she has generously permitted me to quote at some length:

According to the Nagovisi, there is no mythical relationship between Eagle and Makonai nor between Hornbill and Poreu. They seem to belong to entirely different symbolic systems. . . . Both Eagle and Hornbill are thought to be exemplary because they seem to have many human virtues. Both are large, monogamous, make substantial house-like nests, and produce only one offspring at a time. (Nash 1972:69–70)

Continuing from this source:

There are a number of stories about Poreu and Makonai, both of whom were mythic (*kobonara*) spirits (*mara*).

Story one: Poreu and Makonai were sisters-in-law. Poreu didn't know about fire and used to lay her taro corms out in the sun to cook them. One day, she went to Makonai's house, where she was served some cooked taro. "This is better," she said, "how did you do it?" Makonai showed her fire. Poreu offered to buy some with a strand of *wiasi*, but Makonai gave her some fire for nothing, saying that fire is not something we should pay for. *Variant ending:* Poreu did pay for the fire with some *mekala wiasi* [*wiasi*] (sacred shell money that some Eagle female clans and lineages possess) and this is why Hornbill people have no *mekala wiasi* today.

Each had children. Makonai's only son was a snake called *paramorung*. He was hacked to pieces by his brothers-in-law, who were revolted by the idea that their sister had married a snake. Poreu had three children, the first of whom was a giant tree-rat (*langala*), the second of whom was an eel (*barama*) and the third of which was a vine (*aiwa*). Poreu people are not to eat *langala* or eel. Ingestion of such forbidden foods will cause sores. Snakes in any case are considered inedible. Both Makonai and Poreu cause sores to appear on children who have not had the proper "growing-up rites" (*mavo*) done for them, but Poreu is said to be basically evil, whereas Makonai is not. The following stories will illustrate some of Poreu's evil ways.

Story two: Once, all the Hornbill people used to live at Simbawa in the mountains. There was a *mara*, 'spirit being,' named Poreu who would assume the form of a human female and offer to take care of babies so that their mothers could go to the garden. While the mother was away, Poreu would stab the baby's fontanelle with a flying-fox finger bone. When the mother came back, Poreu would tell her to cook some food. Then she would give the baby back to its mother, and the baby would die. Poreu would then slip away to the bush. She did this repeatedly. The Hornbills tried to kill her, but they couldn't. So they decided to trick her and abandon Simbawa. When she came again to the village, they asked her to go to the spring and fill up a bamboo tube with water. However, Hornbills had removed the bottom from the tube and it did not fill up. Night came, and the tree-toad called to Poreu, "They are tricking you." Poreu examined the tube and saw that it was true. Meanwhile, the Hornbills had left Simbawa, but they put a *kuauau* (small bird, species unknown) by the fireside in one of the houses. The bird cried out and Poreu thought it was a human voice, so she followed the sound of the bird. But the people had all gone. When Poreu found the bird, she was so angry that she cooked it and ate it. From Simbawa, all the Hornbills dispersed throughout south Bougainville—to Nasioi, Buin, Siuai, and lower parts of Nagovisi.

Addition to migration story: When she [Poreu] began to follow the Hornbill people, Lightning saw her and killed

her, because he was sorry for the people. Poreu's womb then went up into a tree and became a vine called *aiwa*, which is common in the mountains. This is how Poreu became a spirit—before that, she was a human.

Story three: Poreu used to turn into a pig sometimes and ruin people's gardens by digging up all the food and eating it. She would leave her skin on the fence while she did it. This is another reason why people had to abandon villages in the old days.

The reason why Poreu is bad and Makonai is good is because Poreu did not have fire for a long time. (Nash 1972:70–72)

And further:

There is no mythical relationship between Kingfisher and either Poreu or Hornbill, although there is a “just so” story about Hornbill and Kingfisher, in which Hornbill steals Kingfisher's beak while the two are bathing and thus comes into possession of the large one he now has. Informants told me that there were people in Nagovisi whose totem was the mynah [bird] (*sigino*), but they are considered to be essentially Eagles—just a division of the Eagles from Siuai. Crocodile people are a clan who trace real biological connections to people in Siuai; they would appear to be those mentioned in Oliver's work on the Siuai as a division of Hornbill (Oliver 1955:51), the Gurava (Nagovisi) or Kurava (Siuai). (Nash 1972:72)

According to Nash, “What seems to be is that the Nagovisi system cannot accommodate more than two intermarrying groups” (1972:73).¹⁶ Moreover:

The idea that moiety exogamy is somewhat natural was expressed by an individual who claimed that persistent violations of moiety exogamy by the members of any clan would ultimately lead to a change in the clan's moiety affiliation: “People will say that if they [those Eagles] like marrying Eagles so much, let them be Hornbills then from now on.” He claimed that such a change had actually happened to certain distant-dwelling groups. (Nash 1972:74)

The accounts I had collected about moiety symbols during my brief visit to Nagovisi in 1939 differ from Nash's in several respects. I quote from a paper published in 1943:

Poreu and *paramorun* are said not to be the *names* nor *totems* of the moieties; they are the spirits who founded the moieties and who continue to exert strong influence upon the lives of their human descendants. Both are *kobo'nara* (epigeous ancestral demons, equivalent to the *motuna* [i.e., Siwai] *kupuna*)—that extremely versatile species of demon which inhabited the earth before human beings, their descendants, were born, and who are responsible for most culture. During *kobo'nara*-times *paramorun* was a snake (*Boiga irregularis*, like the *motuna* [Siwai] *ha·ŋoro*); his wife was *poreu*. Later on *paramorun* was hacked to pieces by his wife's people, and his body decay dripped away until it became the ocean. That mishap, however, did not appear to affect *paramorun*'s continuity nor to discourage his matrilineal[!] descendants from marrying descendants of *poreu*; in fact, the precedent set by his marriage to *poreu* has been faithfully adhered to ever since. His moiety descendants—like Adam's children-in-law, their derivation is not explained—continued to marry matrilineal descendants of *poreu* and [their descendants] came in time to populate all of Nagovisi.

The [original] *poreu* now dwells in the Taveru River near Sirogana village, and *the paramorun* now dwells near Hiruhiru, but there are also separate *poreus* and separate *paramoruns*, one for every living descendant. "They are all the same," said one informant, "but the *paramorun* at Hiruhiru is over all the other *paramoruns*." (Oliver 1943:58)

Furthermore:

Paramorun is the chief ancestral spirit of one moiety; it is *not* a totem. The totem of this moiety, the eagle, is said to be matrilineally descended from *paramorun* and to be, therefore, taboo to all *human* descendants of *paramorun*.

No sacrifices of any kind are made to *paramorun*, who is (or *are*—sometimes natives spoke of a single *paramorun*, at other times of the whole race of them) benevolently disposed towards

all descendants and would punish them only in the event they killed or ate eagle.

Paramorun does not seek rapport with descendants, nor patronize wealthy, influential men [as the cognate *horomomun*, “demon-spirits,” did in northeast Siwai]. “Does each club-house shelter a *paramorun*?” I asked one informant. “Why, yes, of course,” he answered, “*paramoruns* are in all places—that is, in all places where *paramorun* people (eagle-tabooers) live.”

Paramorun takes an active interest in the lives of descendants, especially infants, and although never sacrificed to nor petitioned, it helps to protect them against malicious demons.

To *paramorun*’s main shrine at Hiruhiru the souls of its descendants go after death. (The soul is also said to go to the mountain lake; this inconsistency could not be resolved by informants, who—unlike myself—were not troubled by it.) (Oliver 1943:58–59)

In evaluating discrepancies between the two accounts, the reader should bear the following in mind:

- that Nash’s knowledge of Nagovisi was—is—far surer than mine, having derived from a much, much longer stay there
- that the two accounts were collected from informants from different places and during periods about thirty years apart
- that in most nonliterate societies—and even in some literate ones—myths about “origins” tend to exist in many versions
- that the discrepancies between Nash’s and my renditions do not becloud the fact that individual Nagovisi believed themselves to be members of one or the other of the society’s two “maximal” exogamous descent units

Each Nagovisi moiety was divided into a number of more or less localized clans, whose principal characteristics were as follows:

- There was no generic word for what I call “clan,” but each one of them had its distinctive name—which, however, was “just a name” and did not refer to an ancestor, a totem, or a specific place.
- Each clan had its distinctive account of migration to the area its members currently resided in—a mixture of “impossible” myth and plausible history (see below).
- Within each moiety some clans declared themselves to be kin-related to each other through common but genealogically untraceable matrilineal descent or through having traveled together; others ex-

plained their intramoiety connection as based only on “being Hornbills” or “being Eagles.”

- Clans were the ultimate, residual or full, corporate owners of all owned land. Although a clan's lands were occupied and used by a clan's subdivisions (see below), when any of its subdivisions expired (i.e., when its last childbearing female member died), the lands belonging to their clan that its members were then using reverted to the clan as a whole and were reallocated to another of its subdivisions (and not to the offspring of its surviving male members). Moreover, all of the lands owned by a clan tended to be contiguous.

- Each clan owned a hoard of nonexpendable shell valuables, which, ideally, was held in trust by a senior female of the clan's *moniako* (rich, powerful) lineage subdivision and used for formal occasions.

- Each clan had a common set of *mavo* (growing-up rites, cognate with Siwai *maru*), which were performed by and for members on occasions such as birth, first washing, first visit to gardens, first eating of certain kinds of foods, first entry to clubhouse (for males, although females were permitted entry), first menstruation (but not for male pubescence—there having been no male “puberty” rites), first marriage, and first pregnancy.

Continuing Nash's account:

Such [*mavo*] ceremonies were clan affairs and were performed by prominent people on behalf of their first-born children. Generally these ceremonies were performed at the clan holy places. During the ceremony the initiate was decked with shell valuables of the clan, and perhaps the shell valuables of other moiety-mates. Older women of the clan performed ritual oblations and made invocations to the moiety ancestresses. After the rite, cooked feast food was provided for the guests to take home in coconut leaf baskets. (Nash 1974:33–34)

Nash does not elucidate her reference to clan “holy places”; presumably they were places mentioned in a clan's origin or migration stories. As for the clan-owned shell valuables just referred to, they were, ideally and usually, kept by one of the oldest female members of the clan and used only for formal (i.e., ritual and festive) purposes, not for ordinary exchange.

Other than the above, Nagovisi clans per se had no totems or food taboos of their own—that is, none in addition to those associated with each one's encompassing moiety.

I know of no report, published or unpublished, that provides a comprehensive list of Nagovisi clans. During his 1929 survey of several Nagovisi settlements (whose residents numbered 819), Chinnery listed three "clans": Komo (Hornbill), Manka (Eagle), and Bobo ("a bird"). The first two were the names of the society's moieties, not clans; the third, according to Chinnery, "appears to have entered the Nagovisi organization through marriages with females of Baitsi [i.e., northwest Siwai]" (1924:76).

Turning to the area focused on by Nash and Mitchell, its 1970 residents, numbering 435, were divided into four clans described as "complete," plus part of a fifth clan localized mainly elsewhere in Nagovisi. Membership of the four "complete" local clans numbered 217, 144, 82, and 75—which, according to Nash, likely represented an increase over figures for clan membership in the past (in keeping, presumably, with Nagovisi's overall population increase in recent decades).

As stated above, each clan in the Nash-Mitchell study area had an account of its origin and migrations in which some episodes were obviously fictional and others plausibly historical. Here are the stories, recorded by Nash, of the four "complete" clans in her study area.

The Biroi people left Sirogana (an area about two miles northeast of the present site of Biroi village) to get away from Poreu, who had again found them and begun to kill infants again. . . . At this time there were no further subdivisions. Some people, who later became known as the Sirogana clan, stayed behind. The reason the migrants took the name Biroi ['with the back side, instrumental or subject of action for back side, *biro*'] was because they vowed never to return to Sirogana, except with their back sides turned towards it, presumably so that Poreu would not recognize them.

The ancestors of the Lolo people left a place on the beach near Motupena point and walked up to the area they now inhabit. Koniai and Kiau, brother and sister, married a sister and brother from Lavalī called Kowia and Narango. Koniai left her walking stick at Tuberuru, the present site of the Lolo Abolede village, and it turned to stone. The descendants of Koniai and Narango are the present-day Lolo people.

Version One: The Lavalī clan are descended from one woman who came here from Metahawa in Siuai. In time, many branches came. *Version Two:* Lavalī was the name of the first

man who came here from Siuai. He settled at Pakawoi, the first settlement of the Lavali people. Bero people lived in Siuai near a little spring that gurgled, "bero, bero." When some of them came up here, they went to live with the La'meko people, who had left the other Lavali people. (Nash 1974:82, 84)

Elucidating the above, Nash writes:

With the exception of those in the Bero clan, all present-day lineage names refer to named pieces of ground in the area of the clans' present-day holdings. The Bero people, except for the La'meko lineage, have instead actual relatives in identically named divisions living in Siuai at the present time. Members of these Nagovisi Bero lineages either own land in parts of Siuai controlled by their common descent group or have vague rights to land which, in this time of land-shortage [the early seventies], they are attempting to revalidate by moving back to Siuai. This is evidence that the Bero lineages were the last ones to enter this area, and in fact, the grandparents of some of the members of Bero lineages are said to have been born in Siuai areas.

Some of the clans claim a distant kinship to other clans in geographically remote areas. For example, the Biroi people state that most moiety-mates are related to them only insofar as they are all Hornbills—that is, they all left Simbawa together. (Nash 1974:84, 86)

Significantly, even in the cases of the four "complete" clans (those whose lands were located only in the study area), the accounts traced their beginnings to other places (two in Siwai, one on the coast, and one elsewhere in Nagovisi) and either stated or implied that they had segmented from clans still present in the places of origin (but with which they themselves claimed no active ties of clanship). As for the fifth, part clan, its seventeen members continued to acknowledge their clanship ties with their homeland elsewhere in Nagovisi.

The four "complete" clans localized in the Nash-Mitchell study area in the 1970s were subdivided into what Nash labels "named lineages," whose memberships ranged from one to seventy-nine, with most having from twenty to forty members. Also, in 1970, five of those "named lineages" were subdivided into "minimal lineages," which ranged in membership from ten to thirty-three. In Nash's opinion, the larger of the

named lineages were formerly much smaller and came to reach their 1970 sizes correlative to Nagovisi's overall population increase and as a result of certain (colonial) administrative practices that served to discourage lineage fission.¹⁷

In the 1970s the label *wetetenamo* (their-two-one-grandmother) was applied to what Nash calls a "minimal lineage," which in most cases did indeed comprise the descendants of a maternal grandmother—descendants who tended to co-reside in small hamlets (or in adjacent houses in an Administration-ordered village) and, with their husbands, to "engage in intensive economic cooperation (gardening, working with cocoa, buying and raising pigs, etc.)" (1974:27). Moreover, "should a quarrel involve one's minimal lineage with another group, all members of the minimal lineage must become involved in its support" (Nash 1974:27). It is reasonable to conclude that the named lineages of pre-colonial times were also subdivided into "minimal" units of this kind, but in the following reconstruction of that era, attention will be focused on the "named" lineages themselves, which, in addition to their having been smaller than those of the 1970s, seem to have had the following characteristics:¹⁸

- Each of them had a principal name that in most cases was that of the piece of ground, the *osioko* (place of origin, source) where a unit's ancestresses resided when they established their discreteness from other members of their clan—typically, by moving apart. Many lineages also had one or more additional names, which referred to sites of former settlement adjacent to their *osioko*.

- In the 1970s the depth of most named lineages was about four generations "before connections became obscured" (Nash 1974:25). In some cases the "remembered" lines reached back much further—up to nine generations—but with a degree of historical authenticity that Nash dubbed "problematical." It is reasonable to suppose that in the 1930s the same limits and uncertainties prevailed in peoples' memories regarding the generational depths of lineages.

- It is also reasonable to suppose that in the 1930s (as in the 1970s) every owned tract of land was owned, corporately and residually, by one or another clan. Likewise, although members of lineages or part lineages possessed uncontested use rights in specific portions of its clan's territorial estate, when a lineage contained no more females, those rights reverted to the clan as a whole. A male also owned use rights in *his* clan's lands, but when he married (and, typically, moved to his wife's hamlet), those rights diminished and eventually became extinct. (A married man had use rights in the land provisionally owned by his

wife and her lineage mates, including the right to continue using it should his wife die and he remain in her hamlet.)

- As mentioned earlier, the more valuable types of shell valuables were owned by clans (and kept for use on ritual and festive occasions) but were usually held in trust for clan use by a senior female member of the clan's *moniako* lineage.

- As stated previously, growing-up ceremonies (*mavo*) were a clan affair; they were performed for members by member specialists at places sacred to a whole clan. Ultimate responsibility for conducting funerals rested, however, with the deceased's closer lineage mates—hence, in the case of a husband residing uxorilocally (as most of them did), his body was returned to his natal home for burial. Such was the arrangement in the 1970s, and such it probably was in the 1930s.

Two other characteristics of Nagovisi descent units have to do with relations among the segments of a clan. For résumés of these matters I quote paraphrases I made, in another publication, of published statements by Nash and Mitchell; the facts reported referred specifically to conditions in the 1970s but are, I assume, just as applicable to those of the 1930s.

The head of each lineage was in most cases its eldest nonsenile female member, called *tu'meli* ("firstborn"). It was this woman who served as trustee of the [clan] heirlooms, who had final say over distribution of use-rights of lineage land [i.e., of clan land held provisionally by the lineage], and who in general made the final decision regarding use of clan valuables and regarding the marriage of younger lineage members.

In some cases, however, the authority of a firstborn was superseded by that of a *kaskelo*, a more junior but richer and more aggressive woman—a *moniako* (the label which was applied to both men and women who had achieved wealth and prestige through interpersonal and managerial skills). (Oliver 1989:1033–1034)

And regarding the important matter of clan stratification:

Lineages were ranked within each clan: both in terms of seniority and of wealth and power. The lineage tracing its descent from the eldest daughter of [a clan's] legendary common ancestress was also labeled "firstborn," and its members were owed deference from members of the junior lineage branches, called

vidaruma (i.e., “descendants of younger sister[s]”). In some cases a clan’s firstborn lineage was also its *momiko* one (richest, most powerful); however, even a junior lineage could become *momiko* through success in raising pigs, acquiring shell money, giving feasts, and waging war. The lowest status among a clan’s lineages was reserved for those that were both junior and poor (hence unable to give feasts or finance their own defense). These were called *nangkitau* (“chattels”?); it was reported that their members could be killed with impunity by other clanmates and that their children were sometimes bartered to outsiders for axes and other objects. (Oliver 1989:1034)

I conclude this summary of Nagovisi descent units with two more paraphrases of published accounts by Nash and Mitchell.

[M]ost Nagovisi land was identified with particular clans, because of [a clan’s] residual rights in all of the tracts in which [its] component lineages held uncontested usufructuary rights. In fact, those use-rights were exercised by individuals [with the help of their household mates], namely, by the lineages’ older women, and were transferred to the latter’s daughters—usually the eldest—when the mothers died or became senile. (A woman’s own expendable shell money and food-bearing trees were also transferred in this way, but not her pigs, which were eaten at her funeral feast.) (Oliver 1989:1034)

And, finally, a word about Nagovisi males:

Where did men fit into this kinship system composed largely of “official” statuses occupied by females? A male also belonged to a lineage (and a clan and moiety), but what was the nature of that membership?

As already stated, in most cases a man moved to his wife’s hamlet upon marriage; and after doing so he was expected to devote all or most of his energies to the well-being, physical and social, of [his] wife and children and to *their* co-residential lineage mates. Even if a wife moved to her husband’s natal home—to *his* lineage hamlet—the [usual] proximity of it to her land-holdings made it possible for him to carry out his obligations, that is, to spend most of his labor on them rather than on his own lineage lands (which were gardened by the husbands of his

sisters and of other female lineage mates). (Oliver 1989:1034–1035)

I turn now to the Nasioi, whose language is more closely related to that of the Nagovisi than is that of the Siwai, but who in the decades (or centuries?) before the 1930s had had fewer direct personal contacts with the Nagovisi than had the Siwai.

NOTES

[This is the first of two parts. Part 2 will appear in *Pacific Studies*, Volume 16, Number 4 (December 1993) —ED.]

1. In earlier writings about this region and its people, I transcribed their label as “Siuai,” but bowing to the more common spelling, I now throw in the sponge and write “Siwai”—although I still *think* of them as “Siuai”!

2. Wickler and Spriggs 1988; Wickler 1990; referring to which Spriggs stated more recently, “Only one Pleistocene site has been excavated in the North Solomons, indeed in all the Solomons, and earlier sites may yet be found” (1992:279).

3. AN languages were presumably introduced into this area, beginning some three millennia ago, by peoples and cultures now identified with Lapita and post-Lapita archaeological complexes. Both Lapita and post-Lapita sites have been found on Buka (Spriggs 1992:279–280).

4. I use the term “tribe” most reluctantly, being aware of its semantic ambiguities (see Fried 1968). My reason for doing so is that it is less cumbersome than such equivalences as “ethnic unit” and “language unit,” and less ambiguous than, for example, “society,” “people,” or “population.” In any case, “tribe” as used herein does *not* mean “political unit.”

5. I write “renown” because the connotations of the relevant vernacular words are closer to (American) English “renown” than to, say, “prestige”—as given, for example, in *Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary*.

6. A “span” was the length between the finger tips of a man’s outstretched arms. The measure included several distinctively labeled intermediate-unit lengths—e.g., from finger tip to wrist, to elbow, to shoulder, to breast bone, and so on. Nearly every linear kind of entity was measured in this way, including the girth (i.e., size) of a pig. The fact that men differed in length of span seems not to have been a matter of much concern.

7. In Western Siwai, however, *horomorun* was believed to be an ancestral spirit associated not with an individual *mumi*, but with the whole of the Eagle clan—as was his Nagovisi parallel, *paramorun*, with the Eagle moiety. See below.

8. The following résumé of clan mythohistories and other aspects of Siwai matriliney is much longer than the discussion devoted to the topic in the sections on matriliney in Nagovisi, Nasioi, and Buin. Some of that unevenness is due to indigenous differences in

social emphasis, but much of it is due to my knowing more about Siwai than about the other three tribes. This résumé and other versions of Siwai clan origins reproduced in this essay are based on Oliver 1955:46–62.

9. During my stay in Siwai it was customary for birth to take place in a house in the presence only of females. Thereafter the infant was kept in the house—in “Hiding”—until it was considered “strong” enough—i.e., invulnerable to harmful forces, including gratuitously malicious spirits and human-activated sorcery—to be taken outside to be publicly “Washed” by means of *maru*. During the infant’s Hiding—a period usually lasting four to six weeks—no male over toddler age was permitted inside the house, and even the infant’s father was said to be ignorant of its gender and name. During Hiding it was the father’s responsibility to provide enough food, including at least one pig, to feed the relatives and neighbors gathered to witness the Washing, including especially the women who had attended the mother during birth and Hiding.

10. According to Nash, some Nasioi she knew believed that the residents of northwestern Siwai (whom they called “half-castes”) had moieties like themselves (pers. com., 1992).

11. Such an acceleration did, however, take place after World War II, owing largely to changes described in Nash 1974 and Mitchell 1976.

12. This assumption is based on guesswork. I can find no published figures on weights of “Melanesian” pigs. The only ones I ever weighed were about two months old and weighed twenty to thirty pounds each; I feel quite certain that some of the largest ones I saw weighed over two hundred pounds. What Melanesian ethnography needs is not more theory, but an easier method for weighing pigs! (See Rappaport 1968.)

13. According to Nash, the Nagovisi she knew said they had never used the low-value, virtually unshaped bits of mussel shell common in Siwai. They knew about them but considered them to be *piapia* (rubbish) (pers. com., 1992).

14. For reasons I will not attempt to list here, by the time of the beginning of the Nash-Mitchell study, in 1969, the pattern of marital residence had become even more preponderantly uxorilocal (after a brief period of virilocality immediately after World War II). Thus, of the eighty-seven couples surveyed, the “permanent” residence of seventy-one of them was uxorilocal and only seven virilocal—the remaining nine “others” having included some neolocal and some “unsettled.”

15. Interesting to note, the post-World War II increase in uxorilocality was accompanied by a change in marriage transactions from dowry to bride-price. For analysis and possible explanations for this seeming inconsistency, see Nash 1974:93–99.

16. According to Nash, the Nagovisi “tend to see their neighbors, the Nasioi, as dual organizational, like themselves.” Her informants “repeatedly insisted that the Nasioi were basically dual organizational although no one could agree on what the moiety symbols were” (Nash 1972:73).

17. According to Nash, “A local government councillor explained to me in 1969 that all people, except for government employees, must live in line villages, and that in order to establish a new village—officially known as a ‘half-line’ of some neighboring established village—there must be a minimum number of five households. Thus, it is no longer possible for two sisters and their families, for example, to move away to a new piece of ground, which in the past was apparently the first step to fission” (1974:23–24).

18. "There are clues that the internal segmentation of moieties may have changed somewhat since [European] contact; for example, the existence of individual names for lineages, the absence of names for *wetetenamos* (as well as the lack of a generic term for lineage and presence of one for descendants of a maternal grandmother) and the lack of sociological uniformity of lineages could be mentioned in this connection. When coupled with the knowledge of certain historical trends since contact . . . e.g., nucleation of settlements, end of tribal warfare, and so forth, a hypothesis on lineage formation can be offered. According to this hypothesis, in pre-contact times, lineages were *wetetenamo* groups—that is, *wetetenamos* lived in relative spatial isolation from one another and had specific names which they took from the piece of ground they were inhabiting. Because of changing conditions . . . lineage names have become 'frozen' at a position they probably held some time before 1930. No new lineage fission occurred, even though there has been sufficient population increase to warrant it. But pressures have not acted to change the importance of the *wetetenamos* as an interaction group; therefore, it still exists, submerged, as it were, within larger lineages" (Nash 1974:81).

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ISLAND LANDSCAPES BY WILLIAM HODGES: RECONSTRUCTING PAINTING PRACTICES THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHIC FIELDWORK

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At the time of his appointment as official artist of Captain James Cook's second voyage, William Hodges was a promising but young and relatively unaccomplished painter. As the first professional landscape painter to document a voyage of exploration, Hodges was cast into a paradoxical situation. For although he had been trained, under Richard Wilson, to paint idealized compositions in the classical landscape tradition, the explicitly scientific orientation of Cook's expedition emphasized empiricism rather than idealization. Hodges's paintings vividly reflect his response to these opposing influences. Some works exhibit formula-like principles characteristic of planned studio compositions while other views appear to be fresh, direct records of the artist's initial response to nature.

Previous studies of the contrasting influences of empiricism and idealism in Hodges's work are based upon stylistic analysis and archival research.¹ Here, photographs of the landscape views illustrated by Hodges are presented as the first direct documentation of his methods for recording and transforming topographical detail. These on-the-spot photographs, taken from the same viewpoints from which Hodges depicted the landscapes, allow detailed reconstructions of the artist's painting practices.² This analysis reveals distinct patterns, showing that Hodges employed varied methods of composition derived both from his academic training and his experiences on Cook's voyage.

Recent studies of Hodges's work draw attention to the highly personalized style he developed during the course of Cook's expedition.³ During this three-year voyage through the southern hemisphere Hodges

painted an extraordinary variety of scenes, ranging from iceberg-studded seas bordering the Antarctic Circle to tropical Polynesian islands. His role as the first professional landscape artist to document a voyage of circumnavigation offered the exciting challenge of illustrating island worlds hitherto unknown to Europeans. The voyage exposed Hodges to landscapes completely foreign to any that he had seen in Europe, introduced him to the scientifically oriented company of Cook's expedition, and isolated him from the world of English painting. Analysis of Hodges's painting practices provides valuable information both for understanding the artist's conception of his role as official artist of Cook's second voyage and for understanding the process by which he attempted to communicate his impressions to the public.

The historical context of Hodges's South Pacific landscapes contributes greatly to their scholarly interest. At the time of Cook's second voyage (1772–1775) published accounts of pristine island cultures, dramatic scenery, and a salubrious tropical climate combined to create an idyllic image of Polynesia in European minds. The immensely popular account of Cook's first voyage expressed unreserved admiration for Tahiti and its inhabitants.⁴ The Tahitians' beauty and strength, combined with their shameless sensuality, gentle comportment, and remarkable ingenuity made them models for the hitherto only-conceptualized "noble savage." Cook observed that Tahitians appeared so favored by the beneficence of nature that, in obtaining food, they seemed "to be exempted from the first general curse, 'that man should eat his bread in the sweat of his brow.'"⁵ Bougainville, who reached Tahiti some months before Cook's first visit, exclaimed after a walk through the countryside: "I thought that I had been transported into the garden of Eden."⁶ Studies by Smith,⁷ Stuebe,⁸ and Joppien and Smith⁹ argue convincingly that some of Hodges's South Pacific landscape views reflect the paradisiacal image of Tahiti conveyed by early visitors including Cook and Bougainville. These studies examine the structure of Hodges's compositions and his use of classicizing and literary elements, as well as his use of color and treatment of atmospheric conditions. The photographs presented here thus add an important source of new information, providing the first direct evidence for determining the degree of accuracy in Hodges's treatment of topography.

Reconstructing Hodges's Painting Practices

The British Admiralty Orders concerning Hodges's role during Cook's voyage specify that he should make drawings and paintings "as may be proper to give a more perfect idea thereof than can be formed from writ-

ten descriptions only.”¹⁰ These instructions reflect the overall emphasis on scientific accuracy that is a hallmark of the Admiralty Orders. Very little is known about how or where Hodges worked, but Smith suggests that the artist composed many of his views in the *Resolution*’s “great cabin,” a spacious area in the stern of the ship.¹¹ Fitted with large windows facing aft and to both sides of the vessel, this cabin served Hodges as a mobile studio, providing expansive views from a protected vantage point. Sketches from the great cabin and others made in the open air were probably used to develop finished views worked up either aboard ship or later in London.

Cook recorded Hodges’s painting habits on only a single occasion. On that day, he wrote that having accompanied Hodges to visit a waterfall in Dusky Sound, New Zealand, the artist “took a drawing of it on paper and afterwards painted it in oyle colours which exhibits at one view a better description than I can give.”¹² Although this practice of making on-the-spot sketches from which finished compositions were later worked up was likely one of Hodges’s most common methods, almost none of the original sketches are known to exist. George Forster suggested that Hodges’s collection of open-air sketches may even have been lost during the voyage, forcing the artist to work from memory and his imagination after returning to England.¹³ This charge was vehemently denied by William Wales (the expedition’s astronomer) who noted that he had been authorized by the artist to write “that he has not lost any of his original sketches.”¹⁴ At present, however, Hodges’s preliminary sketches are indeed lost, preventing comparisons with the finished paintings that might yield valuable insight into the artist’s methods of composition.

Some inferences concerning Hodges’s methods of composition can be drawn from knowledge of practices employed by Richard Wilson, under whom Hodges received his most important training. Wilson, it has been argued, did not paint his pictures directly from sketches, but rather he composed them from his imagination, using sketches only as a device for mastering the details of nature.¹⁵ According to Joseph Farington, “when he [Wilson] painted views he seldom adhered to the scene as it was.”¹⁶ Academic principles advocated this practice of freely altering aspects of a landscape in an artistic rendition. While president of the Royal Academy, Sir Joshua Reynolds argued that by identifying and correcting “imperfections” in nature, the painter could create a *general* portrayal of nature that would be more faithful than the unmodified representation of any *particular* view.¹⁷ Thus, to the eighteenth-century mind, “accuracy” in the illustration of a landscape was not directly equated with the precise rendition of topographical detail.

Hodges's South Pacific landscapes may be classified into three categories according to the medium employed and the manner of execution: (1) ink drawings colored with wash, (2) oil sketches painted on small canvases and wooden panels, and (3) large-scale oil paintings worked up in London after the voyage while Hodges was employed by the Admiralty. Of the thirty-nine South Pacific landscape views documented,¹⁸ thirteen are ink and wash drawings, seventeen are oil sketches (including ten which, on stylistic grounds, are thought to have been painted during the voyage), and nine are large-scale paintings worked up after the voyage. This study examines a diverse group of Hodges's paintings, focusing on seven views depicting landscapes in New Zealand, Tahiti, the Marquesas, New Caledonia, and Vanuatu. The cultural settings of these views include scenes from both Polynesia and Melanesia while the climatic zones represented range from temperate to tropical.

The most accurate topographical representations among Hodges's landscape views are his coastal profiles drawn in ink and colored with wash. These panoramic offshore views clearly demonstrate the important influence of Hodges's exposure to the naval practice of drawing coastal profiles. Hodges taught some of the *Resolution's* midshipmen to draw three-toned coastal profiles¹⁹ and his own washes bear strong resemblance to views made by the ship's draftsmen for purely scientific purposes, such as to identify harbor entrances. Photographs of the same landscapes represented in the ink wash coastal profiles show that Hodges experimented with a variety of methods to achieve the finished views. All of the pictures give the appearance of distant offshore views, and this is, in fact, the viewpoint from which some of the landscapes were actually drawn. For example, comparison of the New Caledonia ink wash (Figure 1) with photographs of the actual landscape (Figure 2) shows that Hodges's view is a close rendition, portraying an accurate representation of the island except for a slight exaggeration in the steepness of the mountains.

In other ink washes, however, the artist projects a falsified viewpoint. *Resolution Harbour in St. Christina, One of the Marquesas* (Figure 3) gives the impression of a distant offshore view but is actually a panorama taken from inside the bay. The right-hand portion of the landscape illustrates mountain peaks and ranges that allow precise identification of the vantage point from which the view was drawn. Figure 4, a panoramic view photographed from that place, shows the entire landscape as represented in Hodges's drawing. The key topographical feature is a small pinnacle located behind the mountain ridge at the south-

ern entrance to the bay. The only place where the pinnacle can be seen as drawn by Hodges is from along the rocky shoreline of the bay, near the north entrance (Figure 5). Movement of more than a few meters in any direction renders the view unrecognizable as the landscape drawn by Hodges. Comparison with the photograph shows that Hodges's view slightly exaggerates the relief of the mountains and compresses the panorama. Yet, despite these minor topographical alterations and a falsified perspective that makes the picture appear as if it were drawn from offshore, the view is a remarkably precise illustration of the bay.

In contrast to the washes drawn from a single vantage point, at least one of the coastal profiles is a composite, combining different views of the same landscape seen from the moving ship. The wash of *Sandwich Island* [Efate, Vanuatu] (Figure 6) was drawn from two different points as the *Resolution* sailed past the island. Figure 7, a composite view combining the photographs from these two vantage points, produces an image that is strikingly similar to Hodges's wash. First, as the ship passed the offshore islet of Nguna, Hodges drew part of its coast and another more distant islet, Pele, toward which the ship was headed (Figure 8). Figure 9 is a photograph taken from approximately the same position, showing Nguna (far right) and Pele (center) separated by a narrow channel. Hodges completed the left-hand portion of the coastal profile after the ship had almost passed Pele. Figure 10 shows the landscape illustrated from this second vantage point. The edge of Pele is at the far right and the mountains of Efate are visible in the background. A key topographic landmark is the high plateau intersected by a ridge descending to the edge of the island.

The practice of making composite views was one that Hodges used repeatedly. In the case of *Sandwich Island* he may have employed this method out of necessity if the ship's movement did not allow him time to draw the entire landscape from a single vantage point. In other instances, however, Hodges's decision to paint composite views was clearly deliberate, a decision that reflects his training under Wilson and the influence of Sir Joshua Reynolds, then president of the Royal Academy. In his fourth annual "Discourse on Art" presented in the Royal Academy in 1771, Reynolds contrasted landscapes by painters of the Flemish and Dutch schools, whose works he described as "always a representation of an individual spot,"²⁰ with those by Claude, whose "pictures are a composition of the various draughts which he had previously made from various beautiful scenes and prospects."²¹ Reynolds concluded: "That the practice of Claude Lorrain, in respect to his choice, is to be adopted by Landscape Painters, in opposition to that of the Flem-

ish and Dutch schools, there can be no doubt, as its truth is founded upon the same principle as that by which the Historical Painter acquires perfect form."²² Wilson, in whose studio Hodges received training from around 1757 until sometime between 1763 and 1766,²³ also praised and adopted Claudean principles of composition in his own works, even to the extent that one critic berated him as "little more than an imitator of Claude."²⁴ A fellow pupil of Hodges's wrote that once when Wilson found his students wasting time "in idle mirth and frolick . . . he only shook his head, and in his dry loconick manner, said 'Gentlemen—this is not the way to rival Claude.'"²⁵ Hodges's practice of painting composite views is thus probably linked to late-eighteenth-century academic influences that encouraged this Claudean method of composition.

Among the best examples of Hodges's composite views are his paintings of two waterfalls in Dusky Sound, New Zealand. [*Waterfall in Dusky Bay with a Maori Canoe*] (Figure 11), an oil sketch, illustrates a scene in Nine Fathoms Passage. As shown in Figure 12, a photomontage, this sketch is a composite view created from two separate vantage points, both of which were very likely on rock outcrops in the fjord channel (Figure 13). Figure 14 shows the waterfall photographed from one of the small rock formations that could have provided Hodges with excellent places to work. Hodges apparently sketched the left portion of his view from a different, but nearby outcrop. In Figure 15, a photograph from this second outcrop, Cooper Island is clearly recognizable as the spit of land in the left middle distance of Hodges's painting. Hodges combined views from the two separate vantage points to create his finished oil sketch.

Like the small oil sketch of Nine Fathoms Passage, Hodges's more dramatic painting, [*Cascade Cove*] *Dusky Bay* (Figure 16), is also a composite view but one in which the topographical detail has been considerably altered. This large-scale painting, worked up after Hodges's return to England and exhibited in the Royal Academy around 1777,²⁶ combines an offshore view of the upper falls with a separate view taken from the base of the cascade. Although Hodges's painting depicts the entire waterfall, only a small but distinctive part of it is visible from offshore, as shown in Figure 17. It is necessary to hike to the base of the cascade, as Cook and Hodges did, in order to see the lower falls (Figure 18). The composition was completed through addition of a mountainous background and a group of Maoris before a rainbow in the foreground. The finished painting is so different from the actual scene that it must represent a radical departure from Hodges's on-the-spot sketch,

(continued on page 78)

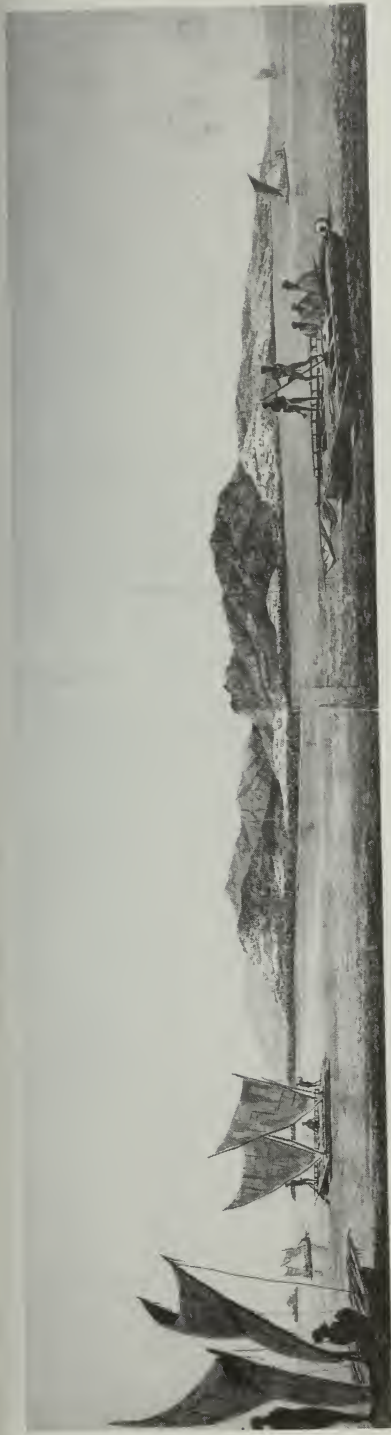


FIGURE 1. William Hodges, [A View of Balade Harbour] New Caledonia, September 1774. By permission of the British Library, London (Add. MS 15743, f. 10). This ink wash is a coastal profile depicting the island with remarkable topographic detail and accuracy.

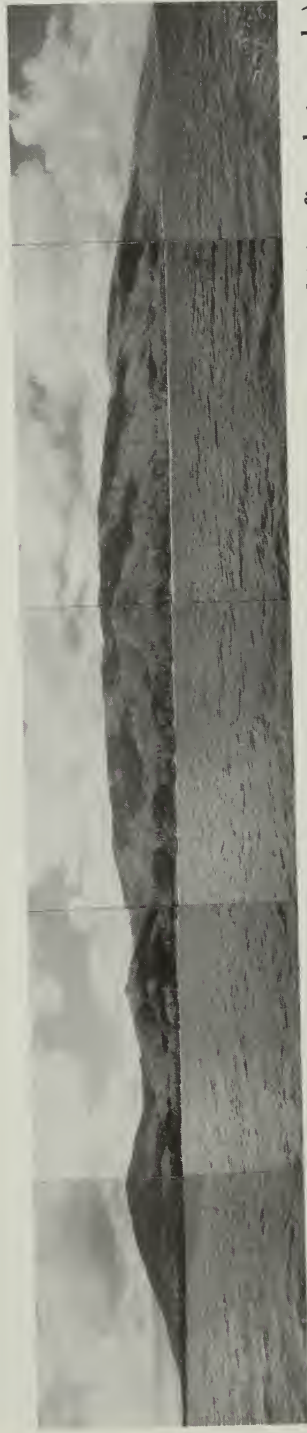


FIGURE 2. Panoramic view of New Caledonia photographed from Balade Harbour (montage combining five photographs), December 1980. Compare with Hodges's [A View of Balade Harbour] New Caledonia.

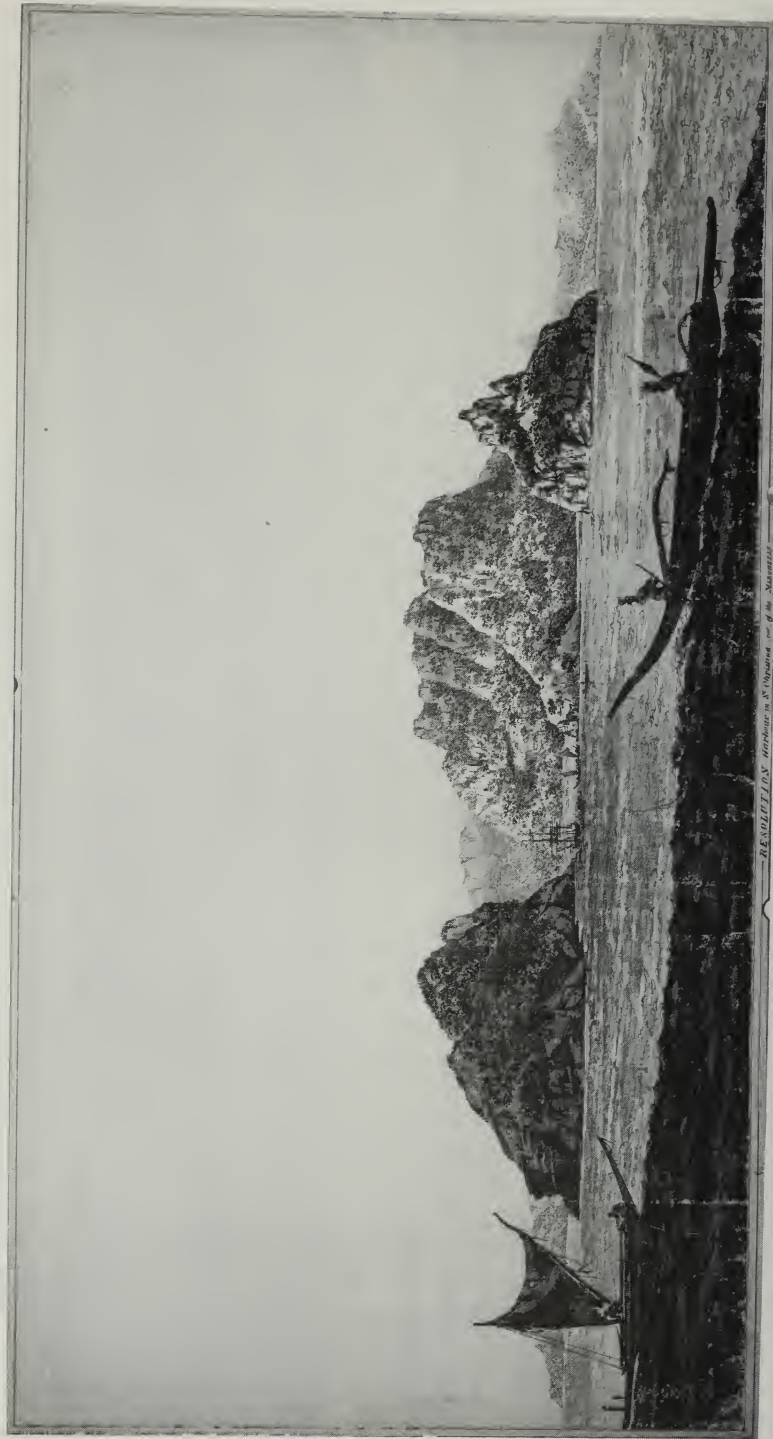


FIGURE 3. William Hodges, *Resolution Harbour (Vaitahu Bay) in St. Christina (Tahuata), One of the Marquesas, April 1774*. By permission of the British Library, London (Add. MS 15743, f. 4). This ink wash coastal profile displays a high degree of topographic accuracy but the perspective projecting the scene as a distant offshore view is falsified. In fact, the view is taken from the north entrance to the bay (see Figure 5 for location of actual vantage point).



FIGURE 4. Panoramic view of Tahuata (Marquesas) photographed from Vaitahu Bay (montage combining six photographs), May 1981. Compare with Hodges's *Resolution Harbour* (Vaitahu Bay) in *St. Christina* (Tahuata), *One of the Marquesas*.



FIGURE 5. Plan of Vaitahu Bay, Tahuata (Marquesas), showing location from which the photographs comprising Figure 4 were taken. This is the vantage point for Hodges, *Resolution Harbour* (Vaitahu Bay) in *St. Christina* (Tahuata), *One of the Marquesas*.

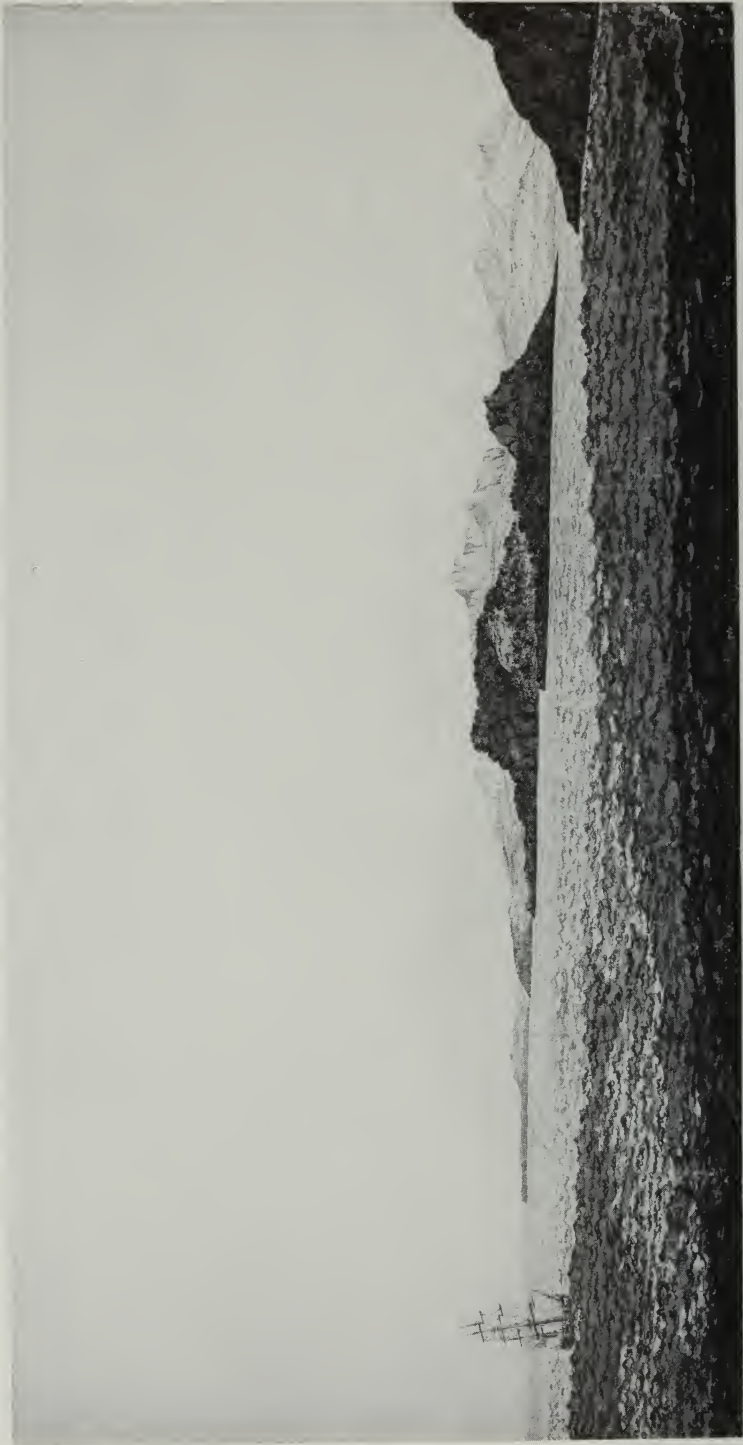


FIGURE 6. William Hodges, *Sandwich Island* [Efate], July 1774. By permission of the British Library, London (Add. MS 15743, f. 6). This ink wash coastal profile is a composite of two views taken from aboard the *Resolution* as it sailed past these islands in northern Vanuatu, following the route shown in Figure 8.



FIGURE 7. Composite view of Efate and neighboring islets made by combining Figures 9 and 10. Compare with Hodges's *Sandwich Island* [Efate].

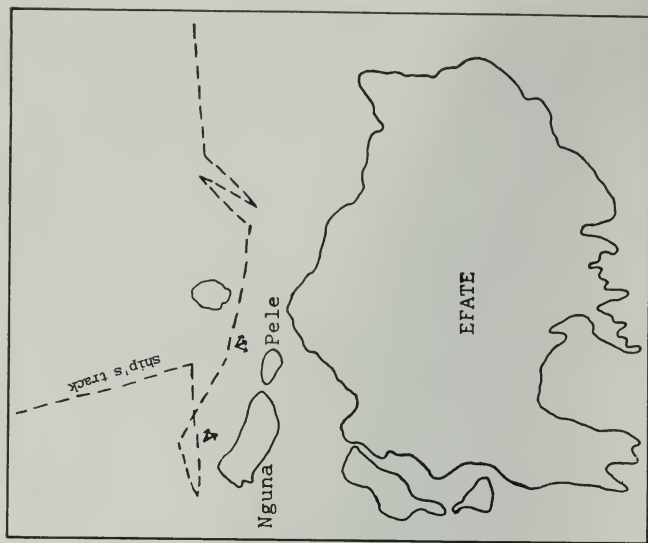


FIGURE 8. Plan of Efate (Vanuatu) and neighboring islets showing the track of the *Resolution* as it sailed past these islands on 25 July 1774 (taken from the chart in Cook's journal). Arrows indicate the vantage points from which Figures 9 and 10 were photographed.



FIGURE 9. Photograph of Nguna (right) and Pele (center) islets with Efate barely visible in the background, January 1981. Figure 8 shows the location from which this view was photographed.



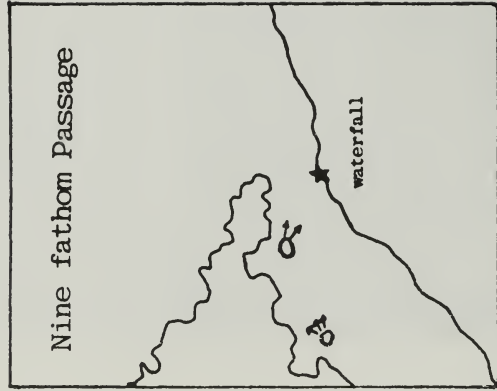
FIGURE 10. Photograph of Pele islet (right) with Efate barely visible in the background, January 1981. Figure 8 shows the location from which this view was photographed.



FIGURE 11. William Hodges, [*Waterfall in Dusky Bay with a Maori Canoe*]. National Maritime Museum, London, on loan from Ministry of Defence-Navy (L36-8). This oil sketch is a composite view combining separate scenes painted from two rock outcrops conveniently located in the fjord channel. Both components of the view are depicted with a high degree of topographic accuracy.



FIGURE 12. Composite view of Nine Fathoms Passage, Dusky Bay, New Zealand, made by combining Figures 14 and 15. Compare with Hodges's [*Waterfall in Dusky Bay with a Maori Canoe*].



Ox : rock outcrops

FIGURE 13. Plan of Nine Fathoms Passage, Dusky Bay, New Zealand (after N.Z. Topographical Map NZMS 1 S157). Locations of the waterfall and the rock outcrops from which Figures 14 and 15 were photographed are shown.



FIGURE 14. Photograph of waterfall in Nine Fathoms Passage, Dusky Bay, New Zealand, November 1980. Figure 13 shows the location of the rock outcrop from which this photograph was taken.



FIGURE 15. Photograph of Nine Fathoms Passage, Dusky Bay, New Zealand, November 1980. The waterfall is at right, Cooper Island at left. Note small rock outcrop in channel (center) from which Figure 14 was photographed. Figure 13 shows the location of this rock outcrop.



FIGURE 16. William Hodges, [*Cascade Cove*] *Dusky Bay*, 1775. National Maritime Museum, London, on loan from Ministry of Defence-Navy (L80-6). This large-scale painting worked up in London after the voyage is an idealized composite combining views of the upper and lower falls taken from separate offshore and onshore vantage points.

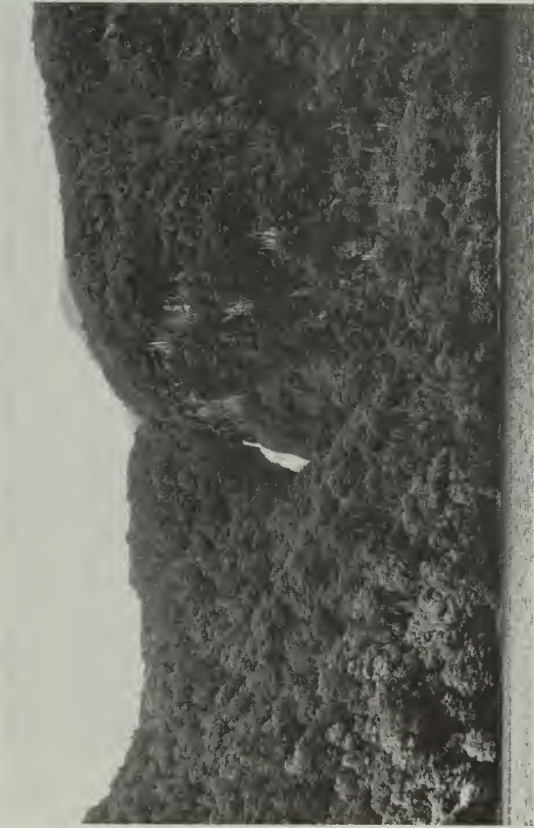


FIGURE 17. Photograph of waterfall in Cascade Cove, Dusky Bay, New Zealand, November 1980. Compare with Hodges's [Cascade Cove] Dusky Bay.



FIGURE 18. (RIGHT) Photograph of the base of the waterfall in Cascade Cove, Dusky Bay, New Zealand, November 1980. Compare with Hodges's [Cascade Cove] Dusky Bay.



FIGURE 19. William Hodges, *Oaitepeha [Vaitepiha] Bay* [also called "*Tahiti Revisited*"], 1776. National Maritime Museum, London, on loan from Ministry of Defence-Navy (L36-19). This large-scale painting worked up in London after the voyage portrays an idealized view that significantly alters the form and height of mountain peaks in the background.



FIGURE 20. Photograph of Vaitepiha River and Valley, Tahiti, July 1981. Compare with Hodges's *Oaitepeha* [*Vaitepiha*] Bay [Tahiti Revisited].



FIGURE 21. Photograph of Vaitepiha Valley, Tahiti, July 1981. Compare with Hodges's *Oaitepeha* [*Vaitepiha*] Bay [Tahiti Revisited].



FIGURE 22. William Hodges, *A View in the Island of New Caledonia in the South*, c. 1777-1778. National Maritime Museum, London, on loan from Ministry of Defence-Navy (L80-14). This large-scale oil painting worked up in London after the voyage is so highly idealized that only the distinctive curved spit of land on the coast and the location of Observatory Isle are depicted accurately. The height of hills along the coastal plain is greatly exaggerated.



FIGURE 23. Photograph of Balade, New Caledonia, taken from the foothills behind the coastal plain, December 1980. Note Observatory Isle and the curved spit of land. Compare with Hodges, *A View in the Island of New Caledonia in the South*.

known only by the reference in which Cook stated that it “exhibits at one view a better description of it than I can give.”²⁷

Reynolds also advocated the painterly practice of altering topographical details to create “ideal” landscapes based on actual scenes but conceived in the artist’s imagination. The rationale for this practice is found in his 1770 address to the Royal Academy, in which he argued:

All the objects which are exhibited to our view by nature, upon close examination will be found to have their blemishes and defects. . . . [The painter] corrects nature by herself, her imperfect state by her more perfect. His eye being able to distinguish the accidental deficiencies, excrescences, and deformities of things, from their general figures, he makes out an abstract idea of their forms more perfect than any one original; and what may seem a paradox, he learns to design naturally by drawing his figures unlike to any one object.²⁸

The evidence that Hodges transformed landscape views to create idealized images of nature is much clearer in [*Cascade Cove*] and other large-scale views painted after his return to England than in his works completed during the voyage. The large-scale views signal his reentry into the world of British landscape painters, a milieu in which he was influenced not to portray nature as it appeared, but rather to use his discerning eye to identify the “imperfections” in nature and to correct them.

View in Oaitepeha [Vaitepiha] Bay [also called “*Tahiti Revisited*”] (Figure 19) illustrates certain of the changes in Hodges’s manner of landscape composition that are associated with his return to England in 1775 and his reentry into a milieu of professional artists. This painting is a slightly modified version of a view that was among Hodges’s first to be exhibited in the Royal Academy, in 1776. The historical significance of the work cannot be overlooked, for Hodges was the first professional landscape artist to present the avidly interested public with views of Tahiti, already famous as the “Paradise of the Pacific.” Although the mood of the work is distinctly Polynesian, the composition is arranged according to tenets of the classical landscape tradition. The mountain slope framing one side of the view, the river leading from the foreground into the far distance, and the series of horizontal planes receding by intervals are compositional elements of the classical landscape tradition. However, this controlled, measured layout is the only “classical” aspect of the composition. Elements and themes of antiquity such as

those typical of Wilson's landscapes are replaced in *Tahiti Revisited* by Polynesian motifs and themes. The group of bathing Tahitians is placed in the foreground much in the same way that Wilson used classical figures in his own compositions. Hodges praised this practice, remarking that Wilson's reputation was established "by the classical turn of thinking in his works, and the broad, bold, and manly execution of them; which added to the classical figures he introduced into his landscapes gave them an air more agreeable to the taste of true connoisseurs and men of learning."²⁹ Like Wilson, Hodges also sought to please "true connoisseurs and men of learning." *Tahiti Revisited* gives a glimpse of Polynesian life, in the setting of a fertile river valley surmounted by high volcanic peaks. Tattooed women lounge beside a wooden image (*ti'i*) representing an ancestral deity, with a thatched house and a funerary platform on stilts in the middle distance.

It is likely that the Vaitepiha River has meandered somewhat from its course at the time of Cook's visit, for at present the view looking upstream (Figure 20) does not match Hodges' composition as closely as another view from a short distance south of the river (Figure 21). Figure 20 shows the broad river flanked on both sides by low tropical forest, as in *Tahiti Revisited*, but the background of mountain peaks is somewhat different than in Hodges's view. From the present riverbed, the view of the mountain peak in the far right background of Hodges's composition is mostly hidden. Figure 21 illustrates the most complete possible view of this mountain from the coastal plain, clearly illustrating the extent to which Hodges transformed the topographical features in his finished composition.

Although all the topographical features in *Tahiti Revisited* are present in nature, the artist's rendition exaggerates the height and steepness of the mountains, increasing the grandeur of the landscape. The dramatic landscape, combined with the sensual effect of the bathing women, admirably fits the popular image of the paradisiacal South Seas.

There are no known contemporaneous reviews of *Tahiti Revisited*, but an indication of how it may have been received is found in a review of Hodges's paintings exhibited the following year, in the Royal Academy of 1777:

Mr. HODGES, who in last year's Exhibition had several views of bays, etc about the Island of Otaheite, has this year a large piece exhibiting the warboats of that Island, and a view of part of the harbour of Ohamene-o, etc. The public are indebted

to this artist for giving them some idea of scenes Which they before knew little of. It is rather surprising, however, that a man of Mr. Hodges' genius should adopt such a ragged mode of colouring; his pictures all appear as if they were unfinished, and as if the colours were laid on the canvas with a skewer.³⁰

Thus, although the paintings were recognized as valuable documents of Cook's expedition, Hodges was criticized for the methods he used to achieve the plein-air feeling that distinguished his landscapes from those painted by his contemporaries.

A View in the Island of New Caledonia in the South (Figure 22), exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1778, the year following the above review, presents a stylistic contrast to the earlier works shown in 1776 and 1777. Joppien and Smith suggest that Hodges responded to the adverse criticism by switching to a thinner palette and a smoother style when he painted this more academically structured studio view.³¹ The large canvas depicts a landscape seen by Hodges and Cook during an excursion into the foothills of the island's central mountain range. Figure 23, a photograph taken from the path leading across the mountains, shows the most characteristic topographic feature in the view, a small embayment formed by a spit of land. The position in this photograph of Observatory Isle, situated just beyond the point of land, and the relative height of the horizon, also match the scene depicted by the painting quite well, leaving little doubt that this is the vantage point from which Hodges took his view. The rest of the landscape, however, bears only a general resemblance to Hodges's view.

Although reminiscent of the actual scene, Hodges's composition is more dramatic, depicting the hills on the coastal plain with exaggerated height and regularity of form. The painting fits Cook's glowing description of a view from the mountain pass:

The plains along the Coast on the side we lay appeared from the hills to great advantage, the winding Streams which ran through them which had their direction from Nature, the lesser streames conveyed by art through the different plantations, the little Stragling Villages, the Variaty in the Woods, the Shoals on the Coast so variegated the Scene that the whole might afford a Picture for romance.³²

The transformed representation of the coastal plain, the Claudian trees, and the measured proportions of Hodges's composition all indi-

cate that he intended to paint a view of ideal beauty, perhaps even inspired by Cook's description. *View in the Island of New Caledonia* is one of the last paintings worked up by Hodges after his return to England. As such it may represent a graphic portrayal of the artist's personal struggle between the influence to adopt accepted academic painting practices and an intuitive desire to follow his own methods developed during Cook's three-year voyage.

Interpretation

Comparison of Hodges's landscapes with photographs of the scenes they depict allows partial reconstruction of the artist's methods of composition, helping to explain the origins and development of his style. Fundamentally, what emerges is that Hodges's work represents a convergence of two major themes: (1) an astute attention to detail and scientific accuracy, and (2) adherence to traditional late-eighteenth-century techniques of landscape composition. Contrasting influences of the scientific orientation of Cook's voyage and the tenets of the classical landscape tradition combined to give Hodges's compositions a unique character among works by eighteenth-century painters.

Hodges's coastal profiles illustrate well the scientific influence of Cook's expedition. Since these were executed throughout the voyage they cannot be considered to represent a discrete stage in the development of Hodges's unique style. Indeed, recording the coastal profiles was one of his chief responsibilities as official artist of Cook's expedition. Profiles intended for publication, as were many of Hodges's, needed to be accurate enough to allow other navigators using them to identify islands and recognize the entrances to harbors described in the journal. Evidence that Hodges's works achieved this purpose is found in the narrative of a French expedition led by Etienne Marchand: "*Nos navigateurs qui ont fait usage de la Carte des îles de Mendoca que le capitaine Cook a levée, et qu'il a publiée avec la Relation de son second Voyage l'ont jugée très-exacte; et ils rendent le même témoignage du Plan et de la Vue de la Baie de Madre de Dios [Vaitahu Bay, Marquesas Islands]. . . .*"³³

However, although Hodges's coastal profiles are accurate enough to serve as navigational guides, they differ significantly from profiles drawn by naval draftsmen. Draftsmen merely sketched the topographical relief of an offshore view, with little or no effort to illustrate perspective but with great attention to details of the silhouetted coastline. Hodges, on the other hand, used toned washes to create a three-dimen-

sional sense of topographical relief. Moreover, he often compressed extensive panoramic views to create more compact images, and in *Resolution Harbour* he created the sensation of a distant offshore view when in fact his vantage point was close to the coast depicted. Nevertheless, the coastal profiles were primarily intended to provide an accurate image of the offshore appearance of an island and are noteworthy for their attention to topographic detail.

In contrast to the coastal profiles, Hodges's small oil paintings usually illustrate closer views of the island landscapes, often depicting individual bays or picturesque subjects such as waterfalls. These paintings, worked up both during the voyage and later in London, seem intended to illustrate the character of the paysage rather than to serve as topographical records. Certain oil sketches are based closely on particular landscapes, but Hodges often painted composite views or transformed elements of the topography. These paintings create a general impression that faithfully depicts the landscape but are hardly unmodified renditions of particular scenes.

Unlike the oil sketches that present relatively unembellished landscape views, Hodges's large-scale paintings present personal interpretations of a landscape. Based on especially splendid scenes, the large-scale views are intended to exaggerate the grandeur and the sublime qualities of the landscape. They are more consciously intended to commemorate Cook's expedition than the smaller oil paintings and coastal profiles, which are better described as scientific records and artist's impressions. The large-scale paintings invoke meaning by presenting allegorical themes such as the paradisiacal beauty of the South Sea islands and the pristine, uncorrupted Polynesian way of life. Europeans fascinated by the recent discoveries of Herculaneum and Pompeii were quick to draw an analogy between the natural, unspoiled way of life believed to have existed during classical times and the seemingly carefree Polynesian lifestyle. Though his paintings portray an idyllic image of Polynesia, Hodges may not have consciously distorted his own perception of what, to him, apparently was an actual tropical paradise. His philosophy of landscape painting, as outlined towards the end of his career, emphasized that "the imagination must be under the strict guidance of cool judgement, or we shall have fanciful representations instead of the truth, which, above all, must be the object of such researches."³⁴ In painting idealized views Hodges probably intended, as advocated by Reynolds, to distill the essence of the paysage, correcting nature to create an abstract view more perfect than any one original.

Hodges may have hoped that by painting allegorical views he could

elevate his work from the relatively low academic status of landscape painting to the more highly esteemed genre of history painting. He observed: "Pictures are collected from their value as specimens of human excellence and genius exercised in a fine art; and justly are they so; but I cannot help thinking, that they would rise still higher in estimation, were they connected with the history of the various countries, and did they faithfully represent the manners of mankind."³⁵ Hodges's understanding of his responsibility as official artist of Cook's second voyage is expressed clearly in both his writings and his paintings. He viewed the documentary and artistic aspects of his role as being inextricably linked. He used his skill as a trained artist to portray the qualities of a landscape, and he considered his depiction of the character of the culture to contribute to the intellectual interest of his pictures.

NOTES

The research reported here was conducted in 1980–1981 during a postgraduate fellowship year of independent study funded by the Thomas J. Watson Foundation. People on many islands befriended me and joined the search to locate scenes illustrated in Hodges's landscape views. I acknowledge with gratitude their enthusiastic help. I am also grateful for the encouragement, valuable comments, and criticism that I received from Bernard Smith and Duncan Robinson as I prepared this article. I thank Joseph Singer for making black-and-white prints from my color slides.

1. B. Smith, "William Hodges and English Plein-Air Painting," *Art History*, vol. 6, no. 2, June 1983, pp. 143–152; B. Smith, *Imagining the Pacific: In the Wake of the Cook Voyages*, New Haven and London, 1992; B. Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific, 1768–1850*, 2d ed., New Haven and London, 1985; I. C. Stuebe, *The Life and Works of William Hodges*, New York, 1979; R. Joppien and B. Smith, *The Art of Captain Cook's Voyages*, II, *The Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772–1775*, New Haven and London, 1985.

2. The photographs presented here were taken by the author during a yearlong study (August 1980 to September 1981) supported by a postgraduate traveling fellowship from the Thomas J. Watson Foundation. The project involved archival research at the British Library and fieldwork on twenty-eight South Pacific islands. The study was limited to Hodges's South Pacific landscapes, a group of works that nonetheless comprises the majority of his paintings from Cook's voyage. More specifically, the study focused only on paintings that illustrate distinctive landscapes, such as ones depicting high mountain ranges, so that it would be possible to identify with certainty a particular view when it was located. Information compiled from journals and charts documenting Cook's second voyage facilitated on-the-spot identification of the landscape views. Such information was essential in some cases because many of Hodges's picture captions provide little information, often only the name of the island depicted. Information from journals and charts about the places visited on each island, the location of the *Resolution's* anchorages, and the ship's route was useful in narrowing down the number of possible locations to be checked in the

field. On-the-spot location of vantage points from which each of the landscapes was depicted was made by reference to photographs of Hodges's paintings but often required persistent searching and the cooperation of local guides.

3. Smith 1983, op. cit.; Stuebe, op. cit.
4. J. Hawkesworth, *An Account of the Voyages undertaken by the order of His Present Majesty for making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere . . .*, London, 1773, II.
5. Ibid., p. 186.
6. "Je me croyais transporté dans le jardin d'Eden." L. A. Bougainville, *Voyage autour du monde, par la fregate du roi La Boudeuse, et La Flute L'Etoile; En 1766, 1767, 1768 & 1769*, Paris, 1771, p. 148.
7. B. Smith, "Art as Information: Reflections on the Art from Captain Cook's Voyages" (The annual lecture del. to the Australian Academy of the Humanities, Canberra, 16 May 1978), Sydney, 1979; Smith 1983, op. cit.; Smith 1985, op. cit.
8. Stuebe, op. cit.
9. Joppien and Smith, op. cit.
10. PRO, Adm 2/97, ff. 542-543, quoted in ibid, p. 3.
11. Smith 1983, op. cit., p. 146.
12. J. C. Beaglehole, ed., *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery*, Hakluyt Society, London, 1961, II, p. 119.
13. G. Forster, *A Voyage round the World in His Britannic Majesty's Sloop, RESOLUTION, commanded by Captain James Cook, during the years 1772, 3, 4, and 5*, London, 1777, I, p. 427.
14. W. Wales, *Remarks on Mr. Forster's Account of Captain Cook's last Voyage round the World: In the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, London, 1778, p. 29.
15. B. Ford, "Richard Wilson in Rome," *Burlington*, XCIV, 1952, pp. 307-313.
16. Quoted in W. G. Constable, *Richard Wilson*, Cambridge, 1953, p. 43.
17. J. Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, ed. R. R. Wark, San Marino, Calif., 1959, p. 44.
18. Stuebe, op. cit.; Joppien and Smith, op. cit.
19. Beaglehole, op. cit., p. clviii.
20. Reynolds, op. cit., p. 69.
21. Reynolds, op. cit., p. 70.
22. Ibid.
23. Constable, op. cit., p. 139.
24. Ford, op. cit., p. 313.
25. J. Farington, quoted in Constable, op. cit., p. 56.
26. Stuebe, op. cit., pp. 120-121.

27. Beaglehole, op. cit., p. 119.
28. Reynolds, op. cit., p. 44.
29. W. Hodges, quoted in Constable, op. cit., p. 42.
30. *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, no. 1174, 25–8, April 1777, p. 1, quoted in Smith 1983, op. cit., p. 151.
31. Joppien and Smith, op. cit., p. 98.
32. Beaglehole, op. cit., pp. 533–534.
33. C. P. C. de Fleurieu, *Voyage autour du monde, pendant les années 1790, 1791, et 1792, par Etienne Marchand* . . . , Paris, 1798–1800, I, pp. 64–65.
34. W. Hodges, *Travels in India during the years 1780–83*, London, 1793, p. 155.
35. Ibid., p. 156.

TRADE UNION RIGHTS, LEGITIMACY, AND POLITICS UNDER FIJI'S POSTCOUP INTERIM ADMINISTRATION

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Mention Fiji and the words *coups* and *race* are usually raised, reflecting a unique present and past. Fiji was a British colony from 1871 to 1970, and at least sixty thousand Indian indentured workers emigrated to build up sugar as the islands' main industry. Their descendants would eventually comprise more than 50 percent of the population, leading many observers to suggest that the main tensions in Fiji are ethnic divisions. Although ethnicity did become highly politicized, this explanation glosses over other political and economic issues that cut through ethnic categories. The formation in 1985 of one of the first labor parties in the Pacific Islands was an attempt to challenge not only ethnically based politics but also the entrenched power of the Alliance Party,¹ which had governed Fiji since independence. This challenge was mounted by organized labor, which had a long history of multiethnic organization and opposition to the state.

When the first coups in the Pacific Islands erupted in Fiji in 1987, race was commonly given as an explanation. This article does not aim to retrace this contentious debate but concentrates on the impact of the coups on trade union activities and rights.² The 1987 coups served to exacerbate well-ingrained tensions between labor and the state that have led to considerable trade union activity, particularly under Fiji's interim administration (1989–1992). A journalist described 1990 as “a year of strident unionism with a number of unions taking successful strike actions to fight for what they wanted” (*Fiji Times*, 1 Jan. 1991).

Within Fiji's main industrial sectors, unrest continued during 1991. I argue that this unrest reflected genuine grievances that workers, including cane farmers, faced in the workplace. These workplace conditions cannot be separated from broader economic processes through which the interim administration and many employers aimed for Fiji to become part of a more competitive international market. Partly because of the unrest, temporarily repressive labor decrees and then reforms to labor legislation were introduced during 1991.

Nevertheless, political considerations were integral to industrial disputes, both as a catalyst and as a hindrance to reaching acceptable solutions to much of the trouble. The administration, employers, and labor representatives have each accused the others of politicizing industrial matters. The fingerpointing raised the issue of the right of trade unions within and outside Fiji to challenge the political affairs of a government that maintained it represented a sovereign state.³ Industrial unrest, which trade unions argue has been necessary to protect their legitimate rights, has been seen by some as a challenge to Fiji's sovereignty. At the bottom line, unions have continually questioned the basis of the government's legitimacy not only to hold political power but also to dictate industrial relations practice and policy. While Fiji's interim administration argued that it was protecting national interests and sovereignty, critics suggested that the economic interests of elite groups within and outside Fiji were what was really being protected.

Trade Unions and Politics in Precoup Fiji

Criticism by unions of the state's legitimacy in 1991 was directed at both the promulgation of a new constitution and the interim administration's handling of industrial relations—particularly the implementation of restrictive labor decrees in mid-1991 and reforms to labor legislation in November 1991. These decrees and laws stemmed from the demands of a restructured economy and from calls to restrict the industrial and political role of trade unions. Economic restructuring had been geared toward development of the export manufacturing sector, particularly in the garment industry, as part of a strategy to reduce dependence on the country's main export earners, sugar and tourism. Hince estimated that 43 percent of the work force in 1988 was unionized (1991:57). Most nonunion workers were engaged in subsistence activities or were self-employed.

Attempts by the state to control the industrial and political role of trade unions are neither unique to Fiji nor new in its labor history. In

the absence of any means of formal political expression, covert and overt forms of labor unrest are significant means for workers to express both job-related and broader grievances. Much of the unrest centered in Fiji's major industry, sugar, and was reflected through militant activity such as a major strike among public sector workers in 1920 and the formation of growers' and workers' associations such as the Kisan Sangh and the Mazdur Sangh during the late 1930s (see Leckie 1990b:50-51). Other early attempts at forming unions, as in 1916 when indigenous Fijians and Solomon Islanders at the Lautoka wharf tried to form the Fijian Wharf Labourers' Union, were repressed by employers and the colonial state (Hince 1985). Throughout much of the colonial period concern was expressed that the establishment of trade unions would provide potential for both the individual and collective political ambitions of Indians to be unleashed. During Fiji's colonial period two myths grew that, subsequently, came to color official perceptions of trade union involvement in politics. Regardless of whether workers' collective organizations articulated idealistic goals, they were perceived as a forum for individual politicians' ambitions or as part of the agenda by the "race" of Indo-Fijians to dominate Fiji's political economy.

In 1942 the colonial state, largely under British government pressure, was forced to introduce the Industrial Associations Ordinance. Militant trade unionism, which might have provided a strong, politically based challenge to the state, was partially averted through trade union legislation, which provided for the formation and operation of relatively compliant trade unions, preferably under the ambit of a national center, the Fiji Industrial Workers' Congress, founded in 1951 and renamed the Fiji Trades Union Congress (FTUC) in 1967 (FTUC 1976:5). By the late 1950s and early 1960s, industrial unrest in the key sectors of the sugar, oil, gold, and tourism industries threatened to spill over into widespread instability. The period 1964 to 1966 saw a flurry of legislation passed to regulate trade disputes, worker's compensation, employment conditions, and industrial training. Following the disruptive 1959 oil workers' strike, the Trade Unions Act 1964 introduced compulsory registration for trade unions (see Hempenstall and Rutherford 1984:73-86; Leckie 1990b:58-59). Like early British trade union legislation, it contained provisions inhibiting the formation of stronger and potentially more-political general unions. Militant industrial unrest also was averted through some employers' reluctant acceptance of collective bargaining, which brought wage increases and improved employment conditions and living standards for organized workers.

At the time of independence in 1970, trade unions were not directly

tied to either of Fiji's major political parties, the Alliance Party and the rival National Federation Party (NFP). The latter had its roots in the cane farmers' strike of 1960 with farmers' unions providing the framework for early local organization. The predominantly Indo-Fijian membership of the Fiji Teachers' Union was also openly supportive of the NFP (Norton 1990:77–79; see also Alley 1986:40–45).

In the early seventies industrial confrontation resurged during a period of economic stagnation (Leckie 1988). Restrictive trade union legislation was introduced in 1973. The Trade Disputes Act made it more difficult for workers to take industrial action, especially in essential services. Solidarity strikes were declared illegal and a wage freeze was introduced, which subsequently gave way to wage guidelines. With the establishment of the Tripartite Forum, the second half of the 1970s saw reasonably amicable relations among the FTUC, employers, and the government. The forum provided for negotiated-wage guidelines and dispute resolution, among other industrial relations matters. Such a cozy relationship proved to be short-lived.

Until the 1980s trade unionists, such as James Raman (FTUC general secretary from 1973 to 1988) and Mahendra Chaudhry (then FTUC assistant secretary and general secretary of the Fiji Public Service Association [FPSA] since 1970), were concerned with building a broadly based, multiethnic workers' movement rather than having direct links with a political party. Partly owing to disillusionment with the politicization and factionalism within the Kisan Sangh, the National Farmers' Union was formed by the FTUC in 1978, and Chaudhry became its general secretary. Although the FTUC sought to remain relatively neutral politically, support was given to the Alliance Party by individual unionists such as Raman and Joveci Gavoka (past FTUC president and past president of the large Public Employees' Union). A number of unionists also became Alliance government ministers.⁴

Details concerning the build-up to the FTUC's decision to sponsor a new political party have been well documented elsewhere (e.g., Howard 1991a:146–192; Leckie 1990a:92–95). As Michael Howard notes, by the late 1970s a new generation of trade unionists had emerged who were less willing than their predecessors to compromise on labor issues and had less sympathy for an apolitical ideology. The leadership and organization style of what was becoming Fiji's most powerful trade union, the FPSA, reflected both a growing professionalism and concern with more than narrow workplace issues (Leckie 1990a:90–92). Timoci Bavadra, FPSA president from 1977 to 1985 and

briefly prime minister in 1987, notes his involvement in trade unionism arose from his experience as a community medical officer in the Solomon Islands and subsequent work in primary health care in Fiji. He became increasingly frustrated with the management of Fiji's health services and believed that social and economic development was not possible without political support (FPSA 1979a:12). Chaudhry, employed as a civil servant before becoming a unionist and originally from the cane-growing area in western Viti Levu, also advocated that unions have a wider socioeconomic role and strongly believed that organized workers have a "duty" to speak for unorganized workers (FPSA 1981a:18). He played a pivotal role in the growing assertion of white-collar unions and the National Farmers' Union.

The initiative taken by the FTUC in promoting a political party cannot be simply attributed to individuals. The intensification of Fiji's economic problems (see Knapman 1988:167-170) during the early 1980s compounded a growing tension between government and trade unions, particularly in the public sector, which underwent prolonged and strained negotiations over salary increases (Howard 1985; Leckie 1990a). By November 1984 tripartism was put to rest when the minister of finance announced a unilateral wage and salary freeze. Because the FTUC had not been consulted about this they withdrew from the Tripartite Forum. Strains in Fiji's industrial relations became acute with Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, the prime minister, threatening to declare a state of emergency and use force by calling on the army if the FTUC proceeded with a general strike (*Fiji Times*, 10 Jan. 1985). This did not eventuate but members of the two teachers' unions embarked on a two-week strike in early 1985. In June 1986 the government withdrew recognition of the FTUC as the national union body on the grounds that the council had left the Tripartite Forum. Union sources, though, suggested that government's underlying reason was the FTUC's 1985 decision to sponsor the formation of an opposition political party, the Fiji Labour Party (FLP) (*Fiji Times*, 6 July 1986). By 1986 the new party had formed a coalition with the National Federation Party, which in the April 1987 general elections toppled Alliance Party rule. The coalition's victory was cut short in May 1987 by a military coup led by Lieutenant Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka. Following a second coup on 25 September a military cabinet governed until 5 December 1989, when Ratu Mara was installed as head of an unelected "civilian" interim administration. One of the main sources of opposition to the administration came from organized labor, not only because of political differences but also arising

from industrial disputes. The legitimacy of trade unions to take effective action over political and industrial matters was frequently questioned both before and after the coups.

Industrial Action: A Threat to National Sovereignty?

Trade union leaders argue that if they are to fulfill their role of protecting and improving working and living conditions, they have to insure that workers' rights are protected. Labor and political demands are therefore closely entwined. Clearly this was not an agenda government and many employers in Fiji were prepared to accept. Particularly since the mid-1980s, opponents have repeatedly criticized trade union involvement in politics. Trade union leaders—such as Chaudhry, Bavandra, Krishna Datt, Joeli Kalou (the latter two general secretaries of the Fiji Teachers' Union and Fijian Teachers' Association, respectively)—could hardly deny the political basis of their actions, particularly once they assumed official positions within the Fiji Labour Party. Critics of this failed to address their own political agendas and the way these were part of the discourse on indigenous rights or national sovereignty.

Accusations of "illicit" trade union political involvement were at the forefront of moves to weaken the Labour Party's trade union support. In 1986 a "Concerned Group" within the FPSA sought to form a separate Suva branch, remove Chaudhry as FPSA secretary, and withdraw the FPSA from the FTUC with the slogan, "No Politics Please, We Are Fiji Civil Servants." An "Information Paper" that was circulated stated: "There is no doubt in Fiji today that the *political neutrality* of the civil servants has been compromised through the involvement of the FPSA in the politics of the nation. It can be stated that the civil servants of this country, through the FPSA, were responsible for the fall of the Alliance Government and the birth of the Labour Party" (copy in FPSA files). Expelled from the FPSA, this group went on after the first coup to form the ethnically based Viti Civil Servants' Association (VCSA). While continuing to advocate the political neutrality of trade unions, the VCSA was linked with the Taukei Movement and enjoyed the support of the Public Service Commission.⁵ In an address to the VCSA's 1991 conference, Rabuka commended the group for following "responsible trade unionism" and warned that trade unionists should not use unions to further their own political ends. Again, collective issues were reduced to a personal level (*Fiji Times*, 6 May 1991).

On several occasions, union calls for industrial action were dismissed by the interim government as politically motivated. This rationale was

frequently given to declare intended strike action illegal. In mid-1991 Sailosi Kepa, the attorney general and minister for justice, declared a planned strike by the FTUC illegal on the basis that it was about political issues and not a trade dispute (*ibid.*, 11 July 1991). The threatened strike was a reaction to the promulgation of severe decrees aimed at restricting the industrial activities of trade unions and cane farmers, and to the government's intention to introduce a 10-percent value-added tax in July 1992. In the absence of any political or industrial relations forum to debate such regulations, and failing to receive a response to requests for dialogue with the prime minister, the unions considered they had no option but to threaten a strike. Widespread support for the FTUC's call for a general strike included almost all unions with the exception of some pro-Taukei ones. Adi Litia Cakabou, a Taukei leader, claimed that the FTUC was bent on destroying the economy by staging the strike but suggested that the Taukei's opposition to the strike was not political: "It is quite clear that the decisions and activities of the FTUC and the NFU [National Farmers' Union] are politically inspired and motivated" (*ibid.*, 1 July 1991).

Since the coups, claims by government and employers that unions were aiming to destabilize the economy and threatening national sovereignty have been a frequent response to industrial action. Trade unions did pose some threat to the military regime when they called for international trade bans after the coup (Leckie 1991). Although subsequent calls for such action were made, international trade union bodies and governments have been generally reluctant to take such measures, particularly during a time of international recession. International sanctions from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions were a strong possibility when the Fiji government announced plans to further restrict the trade union rights of public sector employees. Taniela Veitata, the minister of employment and industrial relations, hit out at this as "tantamount to a declaration of war" and warned the Public Services International and the New Zealand Public Service Association "that any further international trade union action would be construed as interfering in Fiji's sovereignty" (*Fiji Times*, 2 May 1989).

Claims that Fiji's political sovereignty was threatened have not only had a political basis but were tied in with the government's economic agenda. Strikes during 1990 and 1991 in the garment industry, in particular, were labeled by the interim government's spokespersons as being politically motivated. Permanent Secretary for Trade and Commerce Navi Naisoro stated that his ministry believes "the strikes in the garment industry are being carefully orchestrated to undermine the govern-

ment.” To justify this statement he cited how a strike in September 1990 at Mark One Apparel coincided with the opening of the Australian-Fiji Business Council meeting in Nadi and suggested a strike the following month at Just Cham was aimed at undermining the government’s position in negotiations then underway in the United States (*ibid.*, 11 Oct. 1990). Government was also sensitive about the international trade union links garment workers were developing, such as when Chaudhry threatened to call for overseas supporters to lobby the governments of Fiji’s garment export markets (*ibid.*, 12 Oct. 1990). Ema Druavesi, then general secretary of the Fiji Association of Garment Workers, later warned of an international boycott over the dismissal of three union activists from Lotus Garments when the Ministry of Employment and Industrial Relations refused to register the dismissal as an industrial dispute and initiate conciliation (*ibid.*, 2 Nov. 1990). Around one hundred workers went on a twenty-eight-day strike over this and what they described as “appalling working conditions and extremely long hours” of sometimes up to twenty-four hours, although Padam Lala, the manager, denied this.

Official views also dismissed a prolonged strike in 1991 by goldminers at Vatukoula as being politically motivated. Employment Minister Veitata suggested that the strike was prolonged intentionally by Kavekini Navuso, general secretary of the Fiji Mine Workers’ Union, and supporters in the FLP/NFP coalition to coincide with a boycott of the sugar harvest “as part of their concerted efforts to destabilise the country” (*ibid.*, 4 June 1991).

Trade unionists who advocated industrial action and were dismissed as politically inspired have been accused of personal motives. Such a target was Chaudhry, largely because of his powerful role as general secretary of the FPSA, the National Farmers’ Union, and, since 1988, the FTUC. His election to the FTUC position marked a more assertive stand being taken by the council’s affiliates. Rather than addressing the reasons why farmers refused to cut cane in 1991, Josevata Kamikamica, the minister of finance and planning, questioned Chaudhry’s loyalty to Fiji after he stated that the farmers’ union would defy newly enacted and highly restrictive sugar and national economy decrees (see below): “It appeared Mr Chaudhry was bent in bringing down the government” (*Daily Post*, 31 May 1991).

The Legitimate Protection of Workers’ Interests?

Accusations of politicization have therefore been a common tool used by opponents of the FTUC and Chaudhry to denounce attempts at indus-

trial action. The FTUC does not deny its role in founding the Labour Party or that the organizations have some leaders in common, but it has stressed its autonomy from the political party (FTUC 1990b:59). Unionists did not overlook the political basis to many industrial disputes but did emphasize the genuine workplace and related grievances expressed by members. In all of the major industrial disputes, long-term industrywide problems can be identified, as well as the "ordinary daily crises" peculiar to the nature of each industry. Resolution of major and minor industrial problems was frustrated when the industrial-relations machinery was inoperative or when government or employers showed no readiness to reach a solution.

Unions have been frustrated in their efforts to resolve trade disputes through established industrial-relations machinery. Frequently, conciliation and negotiation did not eventuate because grievances were unilaterally rejected by the Labour Ministry. Sometimes no reason was given, suggesting that political considerations have been paramount. The FTUC claimed that arbitration awards made by the ministry were biased toward employers. As a result many trade unionists in Fiji have argued that they have been pushed into taking industrial action or seeking support from outside the country when established avenues for resolving industrial disputes have not been followed. Alternatively, unions have taken legal action but this is costly and has resulted in greater delays in resolving industrial disputes (FTUC 1990b:56-57; FTUC 1988b).

The unwillingness of government and an employer to resolve a dispute was demonstrated, for example, in a strike that was begun 23 February 1991 at Vatukoula by approximately 700 members of the Fiji Mine Workers' Union (FMWU). Although the union claimed the support of well over 50 percent of the work force, the Emperor Goldmining Company (managed by a former Australian shareholder, Western Mining Company) refused to grant voluntary recognition. As in many industrial disputes, this refusal was merely the tip of a whole range of grievances, many of which were long-standing and reflected not just problems with immediate working conditions but also unsatisfactory living conditions in the mining town of Vatukoula (FTUC 1990c; interviews). Wages had been depressed by the company's practice of deducting various expenses, such as gelignite, overalls, boots, housing, and electricity. Miners also complained about not receiving overtime rates. A major source of discontent was the practice of segregated grades of accommodation, with several indigenous Fijian families assigned to substandard, overcrowded, poorly ventilated one-bedroom houses.

Confrontation at Vatukoula was accelerated when the FMWU

claimed that the dismissal of two union officials was victimization (*Fiji Times*, 9 Nov. 1990). Their dismissal followed their criticism of the company's tardiness in paying death compensation to the family of a miner who was crushed to death by a boulder (interviews; *Fiji Times* 5, 9 Nov. 1990; FTUC 1990b:96). Attention was also drawn to poor safety and health conditions both underground and in Vatukoula. In complaints about inadequate sick leave the FMWU claimed that the company insisted workers return to "light duties" on half-pay to cut costs and to bolster an image of a glowing health and safety record.

Actions taken by management during the strike clearly demonstrated an unwillingness to work toward resolving long-standing industrial-relations problems at Vatukoula. Emperor's chairman, Jeffrey Reid, adamantly refused to enter into any conciliation and instead fired 440 strikers on 3 April 1991. The strikers claimed that the company hired local villagers not only to provide scab labor but also to attack picketing miners. It was also alleged that a local chief received considerable "rewards" to provide this muscle for the company—a tactic apparently not new in breaking workers' solidarity at the mines.

The Vatukoula dispute highlighted an enclave in which a predominantly ethnic Fijian work force was subjected to workplace and living conditions widely regarded as exploitative. Co-deputy prime minister Rabuka acknowledged this and several church groups also supported the miners.

The sugar industry, another major sector of industrial unrest, attracted a predominantly Indo-Fijian work force but in recent years has included an increasing number of ethnic Fijian farmers and workers. There have been conflicting views about the legitimacy of cane farmers' refusing to cut cane, but generally, with the exception of government and the Fiji Sugar Corporation, there was widespread sympathy for the immediate causes of a boycott in 1991. Led by the National Farmers' Union (NFU), the majority of Fiji's cane farmers supported a boycott after the Fiji Sugar Commission refused to make a promised third cane payment for the 1990 harvest. NFU discontent stemmed not only from the position taken by the commission but also from government policies (or lack of them) in the sugar sector. Tension had also been strong between the farmers and the Sugar Cane Growers' Council. The NFU had strongly objected to the government's decision to delay council elections, already suspended in 1988, until April 1992.

These grievances may have directly precipitated the boycott but there were far deeper ones within the sugar industry, before and during 1991. Cane farmers had delayed the 1990 harvest until mid-July in protest at

provisions of a new Sugar Award (the Kermode Master Award), which Chaudhry argued was biased towards the Fiji Sugar Commission and reduced the farmers' share of the sugar proceeds from 70–75 to 60 percent by passing on extra harvesting and transport costs to the farmers (*Fiji Times*, 11 June 1990). During this dispute the NFU, rather than the growers' council, commanded the support of most of Fiji's 22,000 cane farmers (actual NFU membership for 1991 was around 11,000). Although a compromise was reached, tensions continued within the sugar industry. Indo-Fijian cane farming communities also faced considerable insecurity with land leases due to expire in 1997.

Decrees introduced in May 1991 clearly sought to control industrial unrest in the sugar and goldmining industries, two enclaves of export production established during the colonial era. Although these decrees were lifted in July, labor legislation introduced the following November aimed to restrict labor organizations in these established industries and also within the tax-free factories, the new growth area of Fiji's economy (see Chandra 1988).

The factories employ a multiethnic, predominantly female work force. Initially unions were prohibited from tax-free areas but since late 1989 the government has accepted the registration of the Fiji Association of Garment Workers (FAGW). Manufacturers generally refused recognition until industrial action was taken by the union. Esiteri Tuilovoni, FAGW's secretary, stressed that the union took such a path in response to members' complaints about working conditions and wages and only after attempts at negotiation with employers had failed (Leckie 1992a:9–12). Even after a Wages Council order set minimum hourly wage rates at 65 cents for apprentices and 85 cents for other workers in 1991, weekly wages of around F\$25 (*Fiji Times*, 3 Mar. 1990) remained well below the basic poverty level for Fiji of F\$72 a week set by Barr (1990), or the estimated average national wage of F\$50 a week for an unskilled worker. A report by the Ministry of Employment and Industrial Relations found that almost two-thirds of surveyed factories paid less than 51 cents an hour and four-fifths avoided paying overtime (Cole 1991).

A fifteen-day strike at Just Cham Garment Factory (a joint venture with a New Zealand company, Alex Young) provides an example where workplace grievances were dismissed by employers as "illegitimate" and political. Workers listed twenty-four complaints including wages averaging F\$20 a week, inadequate toilet facilities, excessive overtime without extra payment or transport being provided, no annual leave, no tea breaks, excessively heavy work, no employer responsibility for acci-

dents or sick leave, and the practice of strip searching for missing items (*Fiji Times*, 10 Oct. 1990). The FTUC claimed that any worker who complained about conditions to the Employment Ministry was sacked. This dispute escalated, with FAGW general secretary Druavesi threatening a national strike by garment workers, the FTUC threatening a boycott of the factory, and the company warning that it would dismiss the strikers (*Fiji Times*, 20, 22 Oct. 1990).

Unions have argued that they were addressing the basic economic and social rights of workers in criticizing the lack of free collective bargaining in Fiji between 1984 and 1991, when wage and salary guidelines were unilaterally imposed by government legislation. In presenting the case for negotiations, unions cited Fiji's ratification of International Labor Organisation Convention 98 on the rights of workers and organizations to free collective bargaining. The FTUC questioned the validity of official economic indices, such as inflation rates and the consumer-price index, and suggested that real wages declined by 27.2 percent between 1984 and 1989 (FTUC 1990:46). During 1988, a year of a wage freeze, the Reserve Bank of Fiji put inflation at almost 12 percent.

This section has discussed examples of concrete grievances that organized labor claimed to have a legitimate right to address, if necessary by taking industrial action locally and internationally. Within these major industries conflicts between labor and employers and the state cut across ethnic divisions. The postcoup regime's rationale of the protection of indigenous interests has been questioned when workers' conditions and rights were considered. The lack of protection for indigenous and other workers was reflected in various restrictive decrees affecting organized labor.

Trade Unions and the Postcoup Decrees

Attempts by the postcoup regime to control trade unions through various means suggested that political conflict has also been at the front of Fiji's industrial scene. When decrees restricting individual and collective rights were introduced, unions attempted to enter into dialogue. These attempts had usually been rejected and invariably unions then threatened industrial action and called for international trade union support. International support consisted of monitoring union rights in Fiji or threatening international trade and transport sanctions (see Leckie 1991).

The Fundamental Freedoms Decree (*Fiji Republic Gazette* 1, no. 7 [13 Oct. 1987]) gave the military arbitrary powers to deprive people of

basic human rights, such as freedom of movement and expression, and protection from arbitrary arrest and detention. Strikes and all other forms of industrial action were forbidden until this provision was lifted following the threat of international trade union action. Unions found it difficult to conduct routine business as they, like every other group in Fiji, required a police permit to hold public meetings. Written permission was required for civil servants to travel overseas, while at least 120 trade union activists were placed on a military blacklist prohibiting overseas travel (FPSA 1987a:11–13).

The discovery in May–June 1988 of illegal arms caches in Fiji was used as a pretext to harass and detain trade unionists and political activists under the Internal Security Decree imposed in June 1988 (FPSA 1988b). This decree permitted the minister of home affairs to detain for up to two years any person suspected of acting against the national interest. Other powers given to the minister included media censorship, control over the freedom of speech and association, and total control of individual liberty including the right to exclude persons from Fiji.

After the interim regime was faced with internal and international pressure, the Internal Security Decree was suspended in November 1988. But in early 1989 Rabuka threatened to reactivate it if workers supported FPSA and FTUC calls for a general strike (*Fiji Times*, 8 Apr. 1989). A year later a civilian government ostensibly governed Fiji when military leader Major-General Rabuka returned to the barracks, but he soon warned that the military would intervene if trade unionists attempted to destabilize the country by going on strike or if farmers refused to harvest cane (*ibid.*, 23 Jan., 30 May 1990).

Public sector workers, particularly, had seen tighter control over their conditions of employment since the coup, when the Fiji Service Commissions and Public Service (Amendment) Decree (1987, No. 10) removed their appeal rights regarding appointments, promotions, transfers, and gradings; imposed wide-ranging disciplinary offenses specified by the Public Service Commission; required public service officers to seek government approval for travel out of Fiji; reduced the compulsory retiring age to fifty-five from sixty; and introduced a requirement that at least 50 percent of all positions at all levels should be filled by indigenous Fijians or Rotumans. The commission was empowered with “absolute and sole discretion” to terminate appointments to any office in the “national interest”; to change definitions of promotions, transfers, and appointments so that promotions could be conferred without a post’s being advertised; and to change annual increments to merit clauses, which it did (FTUC 1990–1991a:30). FPSA

claimed that these amendments laid an institutional basis to politicize the public service along patronage lines.

Restrictive decrees against trade unions came into force on 29 May 1991 when the interim administration announced the promulgation of the Sugar Industry (Special Protection) (Amendment) (No. 3) Decree 1991 and the Protection of the National Economy Decree 1991 (*Fiji Republic Gazette* 5, no. 37 [29 May 1991], Decrees Nos. 18 and 19). The severity of the sugar and economy decrees drew widespread condemnation and introduced the possibility of an explosive confrontation. FTUC President Michael Columbus described the decrees as "prescriptions for industrial disharmony, civil strife and economic instability" and said they would effectively abolish the exercise of trade union rights in most industries (*Fiji Times*, 7 June 1991). While Decree No. 18 applied to the protection of all aspects of sugar production, No. 19 applied to the protection of the whole economy of Fiji with special reference to the protection of the tourism, copra, sugar, mining, oil, transport, telecommunications, and electricity industries. Both decrees applied not only to those directly involved in hindering the operation of these industries but also to anyone "who counsels, incites or encourages a person to commit any act or omission that harms the operation of a major industry which threatens or is likely to threaten the economic life of Fiji" (Decree No. 19: section 3, paragraph 2). The decrees were deemed to apply to citizens within Fiji and abroad and to noncitizens resident within Fiji. The penalties? Trade union members engaging in industrial action that prevented, for example, a gold mine, a sugar mill, or even a hotel from operating could expect a fine of F\$10,000 or imprisonment of fourteen years or both, while those taking solidarity action could anticipate a fine of F\$5,000 or seven years' imprisonment or both. The latter charge ostensibly could have been applied to a vast range of activities, from imposing trade and communication bans to supplying food or distributing leaflets for striking mine workers. These decrees also aimed to prevent militant international solidarity action.

The decrees could be interpreted as a heavy-handed attempt to curtail union and public support for the 1991 sugar boycott and strike by goldminers at Vatukoula. They also followed in the wake of trade union condemnation of government plans to deregulate the labor market and further restrict the activities of trade unions. The FTUC responded by initially seeking dialogue with the prime minister but this course became unlikely when the FTUC called for the immediate resignation of the unelected interim administration. On the basis of protecting national interests, the government declared a general strike threatened

for 16 July 1991 illegal (*Fiji Times*, 10 July 1991). Conflict was averted through an agreement reached on 12 July between Rabuka (who had resigned as Fiji's military commander to become co-deputy prime minister), the FTUC's general secretary Chaudhry and president Columbus, and Fiji's president, Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau. Ganilau gave assurances that a conference would be held to settle the sugar dispute, the decrees would be suspended, and an attempt would be made to resolve the Vatukoula dispute (*ibid.*, 12 July 1991).

However, promises to refer details of labor reforms and the proposed value-added tax (VAT) to a tripartite meeting of the Labour Advisory Board were not met when labor reforms were introduced in November 1991 and the VAT in July 1992. It was not until 11 September 1992 that a new minister of labor, Militoni Leweniqila, issued an order granting compulsory recognition to the striking miners at Vatukoula. In the meanwhile, failure to resolve disputes in the sugar industry precipitated an NFU strike between 5 and 7 November 1991, soon after the interim government promulgated the new labor decrees (*Fiji Republic Gazette* 5, no. 77 [1 Nov. 1991]).

The November decrees aimed to weaken the strength and restrain the functioning of industrial trade unions, encourage enterprise-based unions, and tighten definitions of industrial action to virtually prohibit all forms. Workers registered in industrial associations were deprived of the right to collectively pursue industrial grievances and those in middle management were denied the right to form or join trade unions. The financial bases of unions were undermined by the repeal of legal requirements that employers deduct union dues. New expenses and interference in the administrative independence of unions were entailed by the imposition of state-supervised strike ballot procedures. The reforms also aimed to weaken Chaudhry's powerful role by prohibiting an officeholder from serving in more than one union or industrial association. Following unsuccessful attempts by the FTUC to secure dialogue with the prime minister, international solidarity was pursued and a general strike notice issued for February 1992.

Political and Economic Interests behind Trade Union Control

Although workplace matters can be identified as precipitating much of Fiji's recent industrial unrest, political tensions, alliances, and agendas compounded the original issues. A key question concerned what was at stake when the interim government claimed that the various labor decrees were to protect Fiji's national interests. Trade unions, on the

other hand, advocated that they were protecting trade union and human rights, in the interests of Fiji's people. Government and trade unions have accused each other of being political and trying to protect and increase their own power base. Trade unionists suggested that the freedom to engage in political expression and in other forms of association had been heavily biased towards those wielding military, administrative, and fiscal power, particularly since the coups.

Trade union criticism of infringements upon democratic voting rights and freedom of expression were diffused to some extent by raising the need to protect the right of indigenous citizens or the "national interest." Although portrayed as being in the national interest, the sugar and national economy protection decrees did not have popular support. Fiji's president initially raised the possibility of bringing in the army to cut cane, but Rabuka made it clear that no such move would be taken (*Fiji Times*, 8 June 1991). He also supported the striking miners, expressed sympathy with the garment workers, and in 1990 had supported nurses engaged in a six-day strike. Several other sections of Fiji's population endorsed trade union criticism of the government's economic policies.

Since 1989 the interim administration had stressed an economic policy geared to internationally competitive export production, particularly under the tax-free-factory and proposed tax-free-zone schemes. Plans for tax-free factories had been under way before the coups but were given a boost when an answer to the postcoup economic decline was needed. This recovery strategy of economic deregulation was accompanied, ironically, by increasing regulation of industrial relations: ready supplies of cheap, compliant labor have been essential to Fiji's economic success. Fiji's government and garment manufacturers became especially sensitive to the ramifications of industrial stoppages within the garment industry, for example, when New Zealand garment importer Gary Sutton warned that if industrial unrest at Lotus Garments in 1990 spread to other garment factories, overseas importers and manufacturers would "merely go elsewhere" (*Fiji Times*, 16 Nov. 1990). Competitiveness within the garment industry had also been enhanced with changes in Australian import policy, which reduced tariffs on imports from non-Forum Pacific Island countries (*ibid.*, 15 Mar. 1991).

Labor reforms that imposed further restrictions on the operation of trade unions were geared to ensure that the interim administration's economic strategies were not disrupted. Plans to deregulate the labor market quickly followed the increasing success of Fiji's garment union in organizing and improving workers conditions, and the promulgation

of a wages council in that industry. Finance Minister Josevata Kamikamica and Berenado Vunibobo, the minister of trade and commerce, emphasized that the deregulation of the labor market necessitated greater control over trade unions. This was seen as particularly urgent with the lifting of wage guidelines at the end of July 1991: "deregulating wages, without also ensuring mechanisms in place to ensure that the resulting freedoms are not abused, could be a formula for chaos" (*ibid.*, 4 July 1991). The November labor reforms were part of the process of moving away from government guidelines or industrywide bargaining, the feature of Fiji's bargaining structure, to enterprise- or establishment-level bargaining.

Fiji's interim administration prided itself on its postcoup economic program. The program may be projected as serving Fiji's national interests but also raised questions about who such benefits accrue to (see Chaudhry 1990; Prasad 1989) and the acceptability of the exploitation of the female work force within the garment industry. These issues, which have repercussions for Fiji's future labor relations and trade union rights, also became tied in with the issue of poverty in Fiji. In 1990 Kevin Barr, a Catholic priest, drew public attention to this politically contentious issue. Estimates suggest that approximately 15 to 20 percent of Fiji's population was in absolute poverty with a higher proportion in relative poverty. To justify proposals to abolish minimum wages and wages councils, Trade Minister Vunibobo argued that employment opportunities would be generated that would help alleviate poverty. Fiji's work force had increased from 79,854 in 1986 to 89,135 in March 1991. The biggest rise had been in the manufacturing sector, from 13,973 (or 17.5 percent of the work force) in 1986 to 22,089 (or 24.8 percent) in early 1991 (Bureau of Statistics 1991). The Reserve Bank of Fiji reported that by mid-1991 garment workers comprised 83.3 percent of the 10,917 people employed in 113 tax-free factories (Reserve Bank of Fiji 8, no. 34 [21 Aug. 1991]).

Prasad, however, stressed caution in accepting statistics as evidence that tax-free factories had rectified unemployment and would do so in the future (1989:5-11), as much of this labor is provided by women who were not classified as unemployed or as part of the official labor force. Critics of deregulation also argued that the lack of protection for local industry would generate unemployment.

Collusion?

Unions have long pointed to the way in which labor-state relations have been tied to the interests of those with political and economic power. On

several occasions the Ministry of Employment and Industrial Relations, for no apparent reason, refused to register reported trade disputes and initiate conciliation talks or arbitration. Unions have claimed that political considerations frequently overrode any attempt to resolve the original issue. For example, during the 1991 sugar harvesting crisis, Chaudhry suggested that the interim government's refusal to enter into dialogue with the NFU and insistence that growers' grievances be channeled through the Sugar Cane Growers' Council made it clear that the government was "not interested in resolving the dispute. They are merely playing politics" (*Fiji Times*, 9 Nov. 1991).

At Vatukoula the interim administration refused to take direct action to resolve the mining dispute until the imposition of the decrees. Official actions and statements indicated where its support lay. Employment and Industrial Relations Minister Taniela Veitata insisted that there was no dispute (*ibid.*, 5 Nov. 1990, 4 June 1991) and that the union should first seek compulsory recognition under the Trade Disputes Act. Kavekini Navuso, general secretary of the Fiji Mine Workers' Union (FMWU), claimed that this denied the "union the right to seek mediation under the *Trade Disputes Act* on our real industrial grievances relating to employment and living conditions" (*ibid.*, 16 July 1991). However, the FMWU later agreed to seek compulsory recognition and by August 1991 the Ministry of Employment and Industrial Relations finally recognized that an industrial dispute existed but still denied that the FMWU was the strikers' legitimate representative. It was not until after the 1992 general elections that the FMWU was recognized by government (but still not by Emperor Goldmining).

The slowness in resolving industrial disputes under the interim administration led to allegations of collusion between government officials and management in several industries troubled by industrial unrest. Union officials did not deny a deep-seated political basis to the dispute at Vatukoula but they threw the ball to the other court, pointing to long-standing political links between Emperor Goldmining and certain members of the interim administration, including the prime minister (see Howard 1991b:30–38). FTUC's president charged, "This regime is completely manipulated by Emperor" (*Fiji Labour Sentinel* 14 [93], Mar. 1991). He suggested that Emperor's chairman had played a key role in provoking riots after Fiji's first coup by busing pro-Taukei miners to Suva, prompted partly by Bavadra's criticisms of Emperor's record and promises to have his new government investigate allegations of large-scale tax evasion and the transfer of funds from Emperor to politicians during the Alliance rule.

The FTUC has also suggested that government was hiding behind "political smokescreens" regarding the conditions of garment workers. Official reluctance to intervene was tied in with "many top government officials including some ministers" who had "pecuniary interests in garment factories either directly or through indirect shareholding. This is why government has sat back and watched exploitation of its people by unscrupulous industrialists" (*Fiji Times*, 17 Nov. 1990). Media attention also pressured the Ministry of Employment and Industrial Relations to investigate violations of the Fiji Employment Act and the Factories Act, particularly of health and safety regulations and the illegal employment of women in factories after 8 P.M. Official willingness to take action was slow. For example, although the Employment Ministry confirmed complaints that female workers from South Island Apparel were forced to work until 12:30 A.M. each night, officials did not prosecute, arguing that it was wrong to move against one employer when others might be breaching the act. The FTUC claimed prosecuting this case would be a deterrent: "It clearly shows the anti-worker attitude of the Labour ministry and the fact that it is protecting the employers" (*Fiji Labour Sentinel* 14 [93], Mar. 1991). Instead the ministry planned a nationwide investigation into garment workers' hours.

The Fiji Public Service Association also pointed to the way in which collusion, based on political linkages, reinforced a unilateral style of industrial relations in certain government departments and statutory bodies. Allegations were made, for example, of collusion between government and the Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji management, when conciliation talks were suspended in December 1987 on "orders from the top" (*Fiji Times*, 31 Dec. 1987). Such political backing, FPSA suggested, made it impossible for the collective agreements in statutory bodies to be enforced (FPSA 1987a:3). Other complaints by the union implied that political considerations had led to prolonged delays in resolving grievances with the Public Service Commission and the Employment Ministry.

Government support of employers has been perceived as part of a strategy to break the power and influence of unions in Fiji. I have documented this more extensively elsewhere (Leckie 1991), but a brief reference can be made to attempts to fragment unions. Kevin Hince (1991) has also discussed the decline in union membership since the coups, although it should be noted that accurate trade union and labor statistics are difficult to ascertain. Membership and union strength were affected by fragmentation into new, usually but not always, ethnically based unions in which membership is restricted to indigenous Fijians

and Rotumans, such as the Fijian Sugar Workers' Union and the Air Pacific Viti Employees' Union. Reference has been made to the links among the Viti Civil Servants' Association (VCSA), senior management, and the Taukei Movement and the opposition most ethnically based unions had to strike action. The FPSA believed that the cessation of access to a roster of government employees was "because of Cabinet direction to protect the Viti Civil Servants union and not cooperate with the FPSA" (Chaudhry to Permanent Secretary, Finance, S12/2339, 17 Aug. 1989). Correspondence from FPSA members suggested to Chaudhry that it "is very clear that PSC staff have been asked from the top to divide the Association" through promoting the VCSA (FPSA files, 17 Aug. 1987).

The Registrar of Trade Unions has been significant in accepting or rejecting the registration of new unions and amendments to existing constitutions. The FPSA accused the judiciary of being in collaboration with the regime when the High Court ruled that the Trade Unions Act did not prohibit the formation of unions that cater to the interests of an ethnic group. This act, however, requires a rival union to command at least 50 percent of the potential membership if a union for the same group of workers is already functioning (FPSA 1990b:23); and the FPSA still had considerably more ethnic Fijian members than the total membership of the VCSA.⁶ On the other hand, the FMWU and the FAGW experienced considerable delay in having their registrations approved. The FPSA resorted to threatening legal action when faced by delays of more than a year in registering amendments to its constitution to allow continued representation of workers in the new corporations of Fiji Post and Telecommunications Limited and the Ika Corporation. Chaudhry accused the registrar of "acting in concert" with the corporations to ensure company-sponsored unions would be registered (Chaudhry to Registrar of Trade Unions S10/625, 15 Mar. 1991).

Conclusion: National Sovereignty and Trade Union Rights

The promulgation of the sugar and national economy decrees, amendments to trade union and taxation laws, and the industrial unrest in the sugar, gold-mining, and garment industries highlighted recent conflict between labor and the state in Fiji, and the political as well as economic bases to this conflict. Trade union rights, along with other political and material rights, have been central issues.

Both the interim government and unions derived many of their arguments from the economic strategies they advocated. The interim gov-

ernment pushed for economic restructuring with government "fiscal responsibility," deregulation, and export-oriented growth, maintaining these were in Fiji's national interests. Finance Minister Kamikamica justified these policies as part of the interim government's charge to revive the economy (*Fiji Times*, 4 July 1991). Critics, however, suggested that the strategies he advocated and the predicted growth rates of 6 percent in the GNP over the next five years would mainly benefit only certain elite groups within Fiji and overseas investors. They argued that many of Fiji's economic and social problems, intensified by the coups, were an inheritance from the practices of the former Alliance government. A lag of wages behind the cost of living, continued unemployment, exploitation of workers, and high levels of poverty have been emphasized. As noted by Rhoda Howard (1988:230-231), trade union rights are linked with material rights to subsistence and work, which means that union activities often become political. Chaudhry acknowledged the politicalization in response to allegations that FPSA officials were engaging in political activities.

As a trade union, the FPSA will continue to speak out against all forms of oppression—whether it be racial discrimination, denial of basic human and trade union rights or the imposition of political and social inequalities on any section of our community. If such expressions are construed as political interference in some quarters, then so be it. But trade unions have a duty to uphold human rights and the values associated with a free, democratic society, irrespective of the odds against them. (Letter to the *Fiji Times*, 13 Sept. 1988)

Unionists such as Chaudhry have emphasized that civil/political rights and economic/social/cultural rights are inseparable (cf. Howard 1983:488) but that neither were being adequately protected by Fiji's interim administration. Many of Chaudhry's critics asserted that he was motivated by purely selfish political ends and that indigenous rights have been strengthened since the coups. The protection of trade union rights, however, raised the issue of individuals' having several identities, including those of ethnicity and class. "The preservation of social/cultural rights of community, therefore, is not enough. Individual civil and political rights are also necessary" (ibid.:482). The maintenance of civil and political rights is pressing in a society such as Fiji where the tensions between the state and organized labor cut across ethnic divisions.

Union criticism of the interim government's handling of economic

and labor policy was not based only on performance and results but has repeatedly questioned the basis of the state's legitimacy. The FTUC maintained that all revisions to labor laws should be left to a parliament of elected representatives (*Fiji Times*, 1 May 1991). The council also suggested that annual national economic summits have served as public-relations exercises to legitimize proposals to amend Fiji's labor market and labor relations that have been unilaterally formulated, rather than going through consultative and negotiated procedures with the bulk of Fiji's unions. The FTUC, along with the coalition and other groups, has rejected Fiji's new constitution (*ibid.*, 30 Nov. 1988). Although it guarantees the rights of trade unions to act together to protect their own interests, these rights can be suspended if a small majority of Parliament votes to give special powers to the president to declare a state of emergency if Fiji's security or the economic life of the country is threatened. Under the new constitution the military has responsibility for the "security, defence and well being of Fiji and its peoples." Consequently the FTUC maintained that it had a legitimate right to assess constitutional matters, as the trade union movement's "existence and effectiveness will depend very much on the freedoms which the society is permitted under a constitutional framework" (FPSA 1989a). Trade unions have therefore argued that any further curtailment of the collective rights of workers would be a serious threat to individual and human rights.

Much of the tension between Fiji's interim regime and local and international labor organizations was generated by the issue of who may determine rights for trade unions and the legitimacy of the state in this role. Although Fiji has been a signatory to several international labor conventions, many have been breached. Fiji has had no official government representative at the ILO since 1985. Trade unions within and outside Fiji have made several representations to Fiji's government and the international community over the detention and harassment of trade unionists and concerning other measures to erode trade union rights under the military regime (Leckie 1991). Interim Labor Minister Veitata dismissed the unions' actions as "a direct interference in the sovereignty of this nation" (*Fiji Times*, 25 June 1991). His claim that government should be free to administer its affairs "without interference from inside or outside" clearly conflicted with the rights—both trade union and political—that the unions claimed they were legitimately entitled to. Hans Engelbert, general secretary of the Public Services International, reminded Veitata that Fiji's "membership of the ILO and our recognition under the ILO Constitution allow us to take such initia-

tive to protect the rights of our affiliates and this we shall certainly continue to do in any part of the world where the trade union rights of our members are threatened" (Engelbert to Veitata, 3 Aug. 1989).

International condemnation of breaches of trade union and human rights was particularly forthcoming while organized labor questioned the legitimacy of the interim administration to uphold the interests of workers in Fiji. Labor's rationale came under criticism once trade unions decided to lift a boycott and contest the 1992 general elections. Although the Fijian Political Party, successor to the Alliance Party, won most seats, the FLP led by Chaudhry secured thirteen seats. This gave the FLP some power in negotiations over whether Kamikamica or Rabuka would gain labor's support. Largely as a rejection of Kamikamica's economic policies and with an apparent readiness by Rabuka to address the concerns of exploited workers, the FLP supported Rabuka. This was conditional upon an immediate review of the new constitution, steps being taken to revoke the labor reforms and value-added tax, and the start of negotiations on land tenure. To date, these promises have not been met.

By 1992 organized labor had a voice in Parliament, but the economic restructuring set in motion by the interim administration was firmly in place. The growing integration of Fiji's economy with the international market could be perceived as a threat not only to trade union rights but also to national sovereignty: "the process of structural change to National economies is exposing workers, unions, and whole communities to the impact of an increasingly hostile free market ideology that threatens not only the traditional values of the Labour Market, the rights of workers but the sovereignty of Countries themselves" (*Pacific Unionist*, Apr. 1991).

The interplay of local and international economic changes, the various "rights" and class interests, and the uncertainty of the political structure in Fiji will undoubtedly unleash further struggles between labor and the state, both in the workplace and in the political arena.

NOTES

This is a revised version of a paper presented to the Pacific Islands Political Studies Conference, Melbourne, December 1991.

1. The Alliance Party was dominated by Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara and high chiefs. Most of its support was from indigenous Fijians although it did secure support from "General Electors" (local Europeans) and some of the Indo-Fijian elite.

2. There is now a vast literature on the coups. For two contrasting views see Howard 1991a and Scarr 1988.

3. Fiji's links with international trade unions are discussed in detail in Leckie 1992b. See also Leckie 1991.

4. For example, Sakeasi Waqanivavalagi, general secretary of the Fiji Mine Workers' Union from 1962 to 1972 and president of the FTUC until 1972; Mohammed Ramzan, secretary of the FTUC from 1960 to 1972; and Jonati Mavoia and Charles Walker, ex-presidents of the Fiji Public Service Association.

5. *Taukei* refers to the indigenous people of Fiji, and also refers to the Taukei Movement, a group that took an extreme stand on the primacy of indigenous political domination. This belief led to efforts to destabilize the coalition government before the 1987 coup.

6. In 1990 the VCSA claimed to have 1,110 members, although other union sources suggest that this might be an exaggeration. The FPSA had 4,384 members in 1990.

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EDITOR'S FORUM

"THE HORROR" RECONSIDERED: AN EVALUATION OF THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR POPULATION DECLINE IN HAWAI'I, 1778-1803

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Even after the tabus were abolished [in 1819] the land was well populated from Hawaii to Kauai with high chiefs, the favorites of chiefs, lesser chiefs, the children of chiefs, and commoners. The land was well filled with men women and children. It was a common thing to see old men and women of a hundred years and over, wrinkled and flabby skinned, with eyelids hanging shut. One does not see such people today.

—S. M. Kamakau, 1867

In his extended essay, *Before the Horror: The Population of Hawai'i on the Eve of Western Contact*, David Stannard argues that all previous estimates of Hawai'i's precontact population, including those made by modern demographers and historians as well as first-hand observers, were far too low and that, in fact, what he calls the pre-*haole* (foreigner, today refers to Caucasians) population was at least twice the size of any of the earlier estimates, that is, a minimum of 800,000 people.

Stannard's essay, which draws upon information from a variety of disciplines including demography, paleo-demography, epidemiology, archaeology and history, and which includes impressive supporting documentation, is powerfully argued—so powerfully argued, in fact, that

it has been accepted uncritically by a large number of readers here in Hawai'i. At the time of the essay's publication in 1989 I welcomed its appearance because I believed that it would result in an upward revision of the commonly cited precontact population figure of 250,000 (Hawai'i 1987:12), which I believe is too low, and because I expected that it would renew debate about this important issue in Hawaiian history. Instead debate has been decidedly muted, and *Before the Horror* has provided a new orthodoxy for many who are either unable or unwilling to critically evaluate its assumptions.

One significant factor that has undoubtedly limited public debate on the issue is the fact that Stannard has carefully staked out the moral high ground (1989:142–143), invited others to respond to his arguments “in specific scholarly detail,” and then branded those attempts in advance as “politically motivated” (1990a:299). This is unfortunate, for the magnitude of population decline in Hawai'i and its impact on the Hawaiian people are issues of primary concern for scholars interested in the history of these islands and should be the subject of public discussion.

Moreover, conclusions about the size of Hawai'i's precontact population and the scale and pace of its subsequent decline will be of interest to scholars at work in other areas of the world. Alfred Crosby (1992) has already suggested that Hawaiian depopulation be used as a model for the Amerindian experience (although he confines his study to the nineteenth century when census data is available), and Stannard himself has used the Hawaiian experience as a model for the demographic collapse of native populations generally. In doing so, he posits a precontact Hawaiian population of “probably at least 800,000” without so much as a footnote, as if the number was agreed to by all (Stannard 1990b).

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Stannard begins his argument in *Before the Horror* by reevaluating what scanty censal information is available for Hawai'i in the period of early *haole*-Hawaiian contact. He starts where all modern demographers have, with Lieutenant James King's estimate of 400,000 Hawaiians, calculated following his two visits to Hawai'i in 1778–1779 with Captain James Cook. Stannard then revises these figures upward to 800,000-plus, in contrast to modern demographers who have revised King's figures downward. Stannard's reasoning will be discussed below.

Modern demographers have revised King's figures downward, primarily because other eighteenth-century estimates of the islands' popu-

lation were uniformly and substantially lower than that of King. William Bligh, for example, also with Cook in 1778–1779, estimated the all-island population at 242,200. Stannard rejects this figure because Bligh provides no methodology with which to explain his count, although the very “unroundness” of the number suggests that there was some method used to determine it. Also with Cook was John Ledyard, whose 100,000 estimate for the island of Hawai‘i, 50,000 less than King’s Hawai‘i Island estimate, is not mentioned by Stannard although Ledyard does provide a rudimentary methodology and claims to have consulted with Hawaiians in determining it (Munford 1963:129). (It should be noted that Ledyard’s journal is notoriously inaccurate, but his tendency when dealing with numbers of Hawaiians was to exaggerate rather than underestimate, as his figures for canoes, people, and houses at Kealakekua Bay all attest [Munford 1963:103, 128–129].) Similarly, Cook’s own estimate of 30,000 (based on 60 villages each containing 500 people) for the island of Kaua‘i (Dixon 1968:267) compared with King’s 54,000 is not discussed by Stannard. Admittedly, Cook saw only the southern and western coasts of this island, but contrary to Stannard’s assumption the leeward coast of Kaua‘i probably had a somewhat larger population than the windward side of the island. This will be discussed later.

Seven and eight years later, George Dixon, who was also with Cook in 1778 and 1779, returned to Hawai‘i and as a result of his observations at that time (and perhaps drawing upon his recollections of his previous visit), estimated the total islands’ population at 200,000. Stannard dismisses Dixon’s estimate for the same reason that he dismisses Bligh’s: it lacks methodology. But he also dismisses it because the calculation was made eight years after the Hawaiians first came into contact with the outside world and thus, from Stannard’s perspective, after many thousands of Hawaiians had already died of introduced diseases. It must be noted that Dixon’s *Voyage* was actually written by a man named William Beresford, who accompanied Dixon on his two trips to Hawai‘i in 1786–1787, and the extent to which he consulted with Dixon with regard to his population estimates is unknown. Beresford did have the opportunity to view large portions of the coasts of Hawai‘i and O‘ahu as well as the southern coast of Kaua‘i, so his estimate certainly would have taken into account these other observations even if the calculations were based primarily on Kaua‘i:

What number of inhabitants these islands contain is impossible for me to say with any degree of certainty. Captain King com-

putes them at four hundred thousand, but, with all deference to such reputable authority, I cannot help thinking this account greatly exaggerated, and indeed this is pretty evident from similar passages in the same voyage. Captain Cook, when at Atoui [Kaua'i] in the beginning of the voyage, estimates that island to contain thirty thousand inhabitants, and from a supposition that there are sixty villages on the island each containing five hundred people. This calculation is certainly in the extreme, but Captain King makes it still greater, and concludes Atoui to contain fifty-four thousand inhabitants, which is surely too many by at least one-half. If therefore we deduct from the remainder of his calculations in the same proportion, and reckon the whole number of inhabitants at two hundred thousand, I am persuaded it will be much nearer the truth than Captain King's calculation, which seems to be founded on opinion merely speculative, rather than the results of close observation. (Dixon 1968:267)

With regard to disease, Beresford's observation of a single case of a skin infection, cited by Stannard to support his argument that Hawaiians were already dying by the thousands in 1787 (1989:7), is hardly overwhelming evidence for such mortality. (Stannard suggests that a young chief's skin infection could have been tuberculosis, which is possible. However, it was much more likely to have been ringworm [Hawaiian *tane* or *kane*] or scabies—both uncomfortable but not often fatal disorders.) More discussion of disease will come later.

In any event, four independent observers, three of them (Cook, Bligh, and Ledyard) on the first expedition to the islands before Old World diseases could have influenced the population in any way, produced estimates, either for individual islands or for the group as a whole, that were lower than King's count. Although none of them provides a testable methodology and all of them may have been underestimates, they indicate a range more in keeping with King's estimate than with Stannard's and deserve consideration when trying to determine a precontact Hawaiian population.

Lieutenant King arrived at his estimate of 400,000 Hawaiians by counting the number of houses at Kealakekua Bay, ascertaining the average occupancy of the houses, and thus determining the population at the bay. In this way King deduced that the population of Kealakekua was about 2,400 people, providing a density of 800 per coastal mile. King then proceeded on the assumption that the population density of

Kealakekua was typical of the entire island chain and multiplied this average by the total coastal mileage of the archipelago (excluding one-quarter of the coastline that he assumed to be uninhabited) to achieve his figure of 400,000.

While accepting King's methodology as useful, Stannard challenges several of King's assumptions. First, he believes that King underestimated the permanent population of Kealakekua Bay by undercounting the houses and by underestimating the number of people who lived in each house. Second, he asserts that King was wrong in assuming that the population density of Kealakekua was typical of Hawai'i's coastline in general—Stannard argues that the leeward coasts were "much less densely populated than windward areas" (1989:23) and, of course, Kealakekua Bay is on the leeward side of Hawai'i Island, "surrounded by a huge and notoriously dry landscape" (*ibid.*:17). Third, Stannard believes that King was wrong in assuming that one-quarter of the islands' coastlines were uninhabited, and finally, that King erred by assuming that inland populations did not exist.

Stannard is probably correct in claiming that there were Hawaiian populations living inland from the coast, although as University of Hawai'i anthropologist Terry Hunt has pointed out, the extent to which these inland settlements were permanent is unclear. For example, the two best-studied areas on the island of Hawai'i, at Lapakahi and Waimea, "appear to have been only temporary in nature" (Hunt 1990:259).

Stannard's other criticisms of King's assumptions seem less valid. Kealakekua Bay was, in fact, an important population center. Ledyard claims that Hawaiians informed him that the bay contained the two largest towns on the island (Munford 1963:129). Edward Bell, on his third visit to Hawai'i in 1794, referred to Kealakekua as "the London of the islands" (Dec. 1929:81). Archaeologist Hunt also disputes Stannard's view of Kealakekua's relatively low population density and points out that its settlements were supported by "massive dry-land field systems" that were cultivated above the bay (Hunt 1990:259). These fields were seen by members of Cook's expedition and are described by King (Beaglehole 1967, 3:521).

The population of Kealakekua Bay was, of course, hugely swollen in 1779 by thousands of Hawaiians who came from all over the island to welcome Captain Cook, whom they believed to be their god Lono (Kamakau 1961; Daws 1968; Sahlins 1981). A variety of circumstances, including the time of Cook's arrival, his clockwise circuit of the islands, and the shape of his sails, all contributed to the Hawaiians' belief that

this was one of their greatest gods, returned to participate in his most important ceremony, the Makahiki (Daws 1968:26). The Hawaiians “knew” beforehand that Cook/Lono would end his circuit of the islands at Kealahou Bay, “for Kealahou was the home of that deity as a man” (Kamakau 1961:98), so thousands were waiting for him on his arrival at the bay. It is certainly possible, in fact quite likely, that a substantial portion of the island’s population visited Kealahou that year as it was the Makahiki season, and who wouldn’t travel for many miles to be present for the arrival of a god? Captain Charles Clerke, Cook’s second in command, noted that many of their greeters “were assembled from various parts of the Isle, and some I know came from the isle of Mow‘we” (Beaglehole 1967, 3:593). In 1794 hundreds of Hawaiians traveled from Waiākea (Hilo) to Kealahou to greet Captain Vancouver and he wasn’t a god (Bell, Dec. 1929:85–86).

King understood that the Kealahou Bay numbers were much larger than normal, so when he devised his method of estimating population he attempted to compensate for the influx by counting houses, not people. But King assumed that the houses were permanent, when Hawaiian houses actually were easily built and easily torn down. In 1794 when Archibald Menzies climbed to the top of Mauna Loa, the Hawaiians accompanying him erected a temporary village halfway up the mountain: “The natives having pitched upon a clear spot overgrown only with strong tall grass, they all set to work and in the course of two hours erected a small village of huts sufficient to shelter themselves and us comfortably for the night. The huts, though finished with such hurry, were neatly constructed and well thatched all over with long grass” (1920:189–190).

Likewise Edward Bell, with Vancouver in January 1794, observed that as the late-arriving chiefs and their retainers entered Kealahou Bay, they set up new houses to live in: “the Bay began now to resume its thronged appearance, large tribes of people coming from all quarters every day and particularly from Whyatea [Waiākea/Hilo] soon altered the appearance we remarked on our first coming in and temporary huts were erecting on every vacant spot of ground in the Village of Kakooa [Kealahou] and Kowrawa [Ka‘awaloa]” (Bell, Dec. 1929:85–86). One can be sure that similar house building went on at Kealahou Bay in 1779, but most of it would have gone undetected by Cook’s men since the crowds of people arrived before, not after, the ships. Consequently, counting houses would not likely have been an adequate corrective for the much larger than usual population of Kealahou in January and February of 1779, and, when used as a means of estimating population

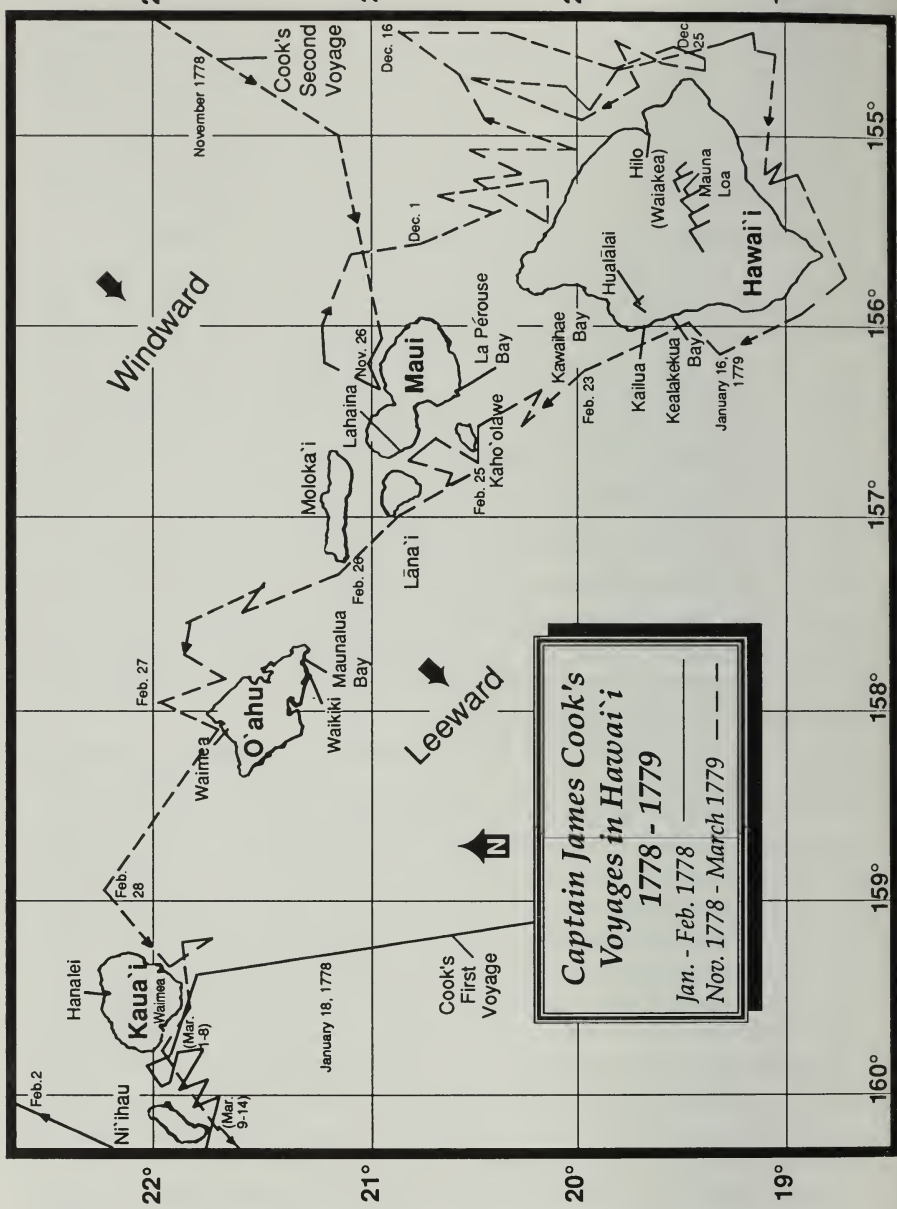
density for the islands as a whole, could have resulted in highly exaggerated figures.

A second problem in using houses for estimating Hawaiian population is that as a result of the *kapu* system (system of rules governing Hawaiian society), each family was required to utilize at least three houses: a men's eating house, a women's eating house, and a sleeping house. Stannard addresses this issue in his argument, but we really don't know if King did so in making his calculations. The evidence suggests that he did not since nowhere does any member of the expedition discuss the difference between sleeping and eating houses, a cultural practice that almost certainly would have been discussed had it been recognized.

Stannard also argues that the really heavy population densities of all the islands were on the windward coasts; that King had got a "close look" at only the leeward areas including Waimea on Kaua'i, "in the heart of the one district (Kona) that was arid and thinly populated" (1989:22); and at Kealahou Bay on Hawai'i. If by "close look" Stannard means coming ashore, he's correct, but the expedition had excellent views of the windward coasts of much of Hawai'i Island and Maui and was impressed by their populousness and high level of cultivation. The ships also sailed past O'ahu's windward coast—at some distance—and landed there at Waimea Bay, which they found highly cultivated. King, therefore, was not unfamiliar with the population densities of windward coasts. In fact, the most extensive coast that he failed to see at close range was the relatively barren southern coast of Maui. (See chart of Cook's ships' movements.)

Stannard may argue that the discrepancy in population densities between windward and leeward coasts was greater in pre-*haole* times, but the earliest census data—from 1831–1832—indicate that the four windward districts of Hawai'i Island were only slightly more heavily populated than the four leeward districts (57 percent to 43 percent), and on Kaua'i in 1853, when the first district breakdowns are available, Stannard's "dry and arid" Kona district (the modern districts of Waimea and Koloa) contained 54 percent of the island's population as opposed to 46 percent for the three windward districts (Schmitt 1977:12). These data, while distant in time from 1778, would not yet be influenced significantly by economic changes such as the development of the sugar industry, and thus should be reasonably reflective of the pre-*haole* settlement patterns. Waimea was certainly a major population center on Kaua'i in the precontact period (Hunt 1990:259).

With regard to coastal settlement, Stannard may be correct in arguing that less than 25 percent of the coast was uninhabited, but he would



be wrong in arguing that most of the coast was as densely populated as Kealakekua Bay. Undoubtedly, coastal settlement varied widely with few places being completely deserted, and some, but not many, places more densely populated than Waimea on Kaua'i or Kealakekua on Hawai'i. In other words, using Lieutenant King's methodology and the assumptions presented above, one could come to the conclusion that King considerably overestimated the population of the islands.

In his chapter 2, Stannard asks if it would have been possible for the population of Hawai'i nei to have reached 800,000, given what is known about the first settlement of Hawai'i, the carrying capacity of the islands, growth rates, and other conditions such as the health of the Hawaiian people. Given the assumptions that Stannard makes about arrival times (first century A.D.), the remarkably healthful conditions that existed here, Hawaiian sexual mores, attitudes toward children, and Stannard's conclusion about the carrying capacity of the islands, it appears that there *could* have been many more than one million Hawaiians here in 1778. Why only 800,000? Or 300,000? A definitive answer to this question is unknown. It is possible that the Hawaiians themselves limited their numbers or nature imposed her own limits.

As Hunt points out in his review (1990:259–260), carrying capacity is ultimately determined by the numbers that can be sustained under the worst conditions. We know from both mythological (see Beckwith 1970: 96–97) and historical evidence that Hawaiians suffered from occasional droughts and that these droughts sometimes resulted in famines. John B. Whitman reported a severe drought that affected Maui in 1806 and that “great numbers of natives perished literally of starvation and thirst” (1979:65). Other early visitors to the islands reported severe droughts in the Kawaihae area of Hawai'i Island—no rain in four years before February of 1811 (Franchère 1969:61)—and on Ni'ihau (1793), which resulted in the emigration of many Ni'ihauans to Kaua'i (Menzies 1920:219). Hawaiian historians Kamakau and 'I'i likewise report on famines (Kamakau 1961:105; 'I'i 1959:77).

Another argument Stannard uses to support his 800,000 figure is the very compelling one of comparison. He looks at what happened to other peoples who after long periods of isolation were suddenly exposed to infectious diseases imported from the Old World. Invariably, the result was that substantial percentages of these “virgin populations” succumbed to epidemic diseases. Exactly what percentages died and at what times in different populations is hotly debated. Stannard cites a long list of authorities to support his position. The reader should know, however, that many of these estimates are highly controversial. For

example, the eight million estimate made by Cook and Borah, and cited by Stannard, for Hispaniola's precontact population is the high extreme. A more recent estimate, although not necessarily a more accurate one, is only 100,000–120,000 (Thornton 1987:16).

The scholar whom Stannard appears to rely most heavily upon is Henry Dobyns, who, along with Cook and Borah, has been most instrumental in revising upward the population estimates for precontact peoples, particularly in the Americas. Stannard suggests that a model developed by Dobyns based on contacts between Europeans and American Indians—which assumes that in the first 100 years of contact 95 percent of the “virgin population” will have disappeared, a depopulation ratio of 20:1—is standard (Stannard 1989:49). He then applies this model to Hawai'i. Although such depopulation ratios, and some that were worse, did occur within certain populations, a standard of 20:1 is hardly accepted by most demographers. Even Dobyns's supporters such as William Denevan, who postulates a New World population of only a little more than half that of Dobyns's, balk at applying such a ratio to all populations:

While Dobyns' total population figure of 90,000,000 [for the New World] may not be unreasonable, his rough rule of thumb for arriving at it, an average 20:1 ratio of depopulation from contact to nadir, is not satisfactory for many specific regions, because as Dobyns has clearly indicated the actual ratio did vary considerably from region to region. Some declines were much greater than 20:1, and some seem to have been much less. (Denevan 1966:429).

Other historical demographers stimulated by Dobyns, such as Ann Ramenofsky and Russell Thornton, are likewise skeptical of applying such ratios across the board, and their conclusions about the size of the precontact North American Indian populations are substantially smaller than those of Dobyns (Ramenofsky 1987:162; Thornton 1987: 23–25). Dobyns's critics, on the other hand, some of whom arrive at estimates far smaller than his, are contemptuous of his use of the historical record. For example, David Henige, in his examination of primary sources used by Dobyns, argues “that Dobyns has been derelict in his use of sources and thereby forfeits his right to have his arguments accepted” (1986:293). William Cronon, in his review of Dobyns's widely acclaimed *Their Number Become Thinned* (1983), illustrates

clearly the shoddy scholarship upon which Dobyns's conclusions are based.

Dobyns, whose principal work has been in demography, lacks a historian's suspicion of his evidence, so that he all too often is willing to stretch his very limited sixteenth century data beyond the bounds of credible inference. He shows little hesitation, for instance, in using the famous but unreliable De Bry engravings of Jacques Le Moyne's 1565 trip to Florida to calculate everything from the number of warriors in a chiefdom to the percentage shares of various food sources in Indian diets: If an engraving shows thirteen animals drying over an Indian fire and if two of them are alligators, then perhaps alligators contributed two thirteenthths of Indian meat supplies! The number of deer in the Everglades in 1974 becomes the basis for assuming an equivalent number of deer throughout Florida four centuries earlier; moreover, Dobyns goes on to assume (without evidence) that the number of deer and turkeys in Florida was about equal, so the turkey populations are easily calculated as well. When Dobyns wants to estimate the number of warriors in twelve Florida chiefdoms and when data are available for only two of the twelve, he appeals to a supposed "principle of military parity" to argue that chiefdoms must have equal numbers of warriors to survive; two bits of data are thus leveraged into doing the work of twelve. (Cronon 1984:375)

The preceding criticism of Dobyns's work is not intended to denigrate all of the conclusions of this influential revisionist school. Most modern historical demographers recognize the contributions of Cook, Borah, and Dobyns, and the general trend is the upward revision of aboriginal population estimates; in some instances the 20:1 model proposed by Dobyns may be useful and appropriate.

However, the application of a "standard" depopulation ratio for all areas without considering other variables and without carefully testing the conclusions against the historical record would be irresponsible. The actual impacts of disease on virgin populations would depend upon many factors including, most importantly, the specific infections introduced to them, but also the timing of these introductions, the density, overall health, and sanitation practices of the receiving communities, and numerous other variables. In the case of Hawai'i, many of the dis-

eases that were so deadly to the American Indians when they came in contact with Europeans for the first time did not arrive in the islands until long after 1778. The main reason for this was that the extended ocean voyage from Europe or the East Coast of the United States served as a natural quarantine.

Smallpox, measles, mumps, influenza, cholera, rubella, typhus, bubonic plague, as well as the common cold and other diseases, are all listed by Francis L. Black of the Yale University School of Medicine as being either impossible or unlikely candidates for early introduction into Hawai'i (1990:272-275). (Black specifically denies Stannard's contention that influenza was among the diseases introduced into Hawai'i by Cook's expedition, explaining that it was "not possible" as a result of the length of the voyage.) Not until shorter trips were common between China and Hawai'i or between the islands and large population centers on the North American West Coast (centers that were not yet established in the eighteenth century) would Hawai'i be at risk for these diseases. It needs to be pointed out that Black provides an equally long list of diseases that *could* have been introduced by Cook's expedition or other early visitors to the islands. These include syphilis, gonorrhea, venereal *Chlamydia*, tuberculosis, diphtheria, typhoid fever, new strains of pathogenic entero-bacteria, and several others (Black 1990:275).

Please note, however, that of the six epidemic diseases that Dobyns claims to have documented as sweeping across North America in the sixteenth century (see Thornton 1987:46), and which he believes to have been largely responsible for the decimation of the American Indian people, five (smallpox, measles, typhus, bubonic plague, and influenza) are on Black's list of unlikely early introductions to Hawai'i. Only typhoid fever, the sixth of Dobyns's epidemics, is not on Black's list, and not surprisingly, it is the most likely culprit as the first explosive epidemic disease to occur in Hawai'i, the infamous *ma'i 'ōku'u* of 1804 (Bushnell 1993). The others did arrive, but none of them, except possibly influenza, seems to have arrived here before 1836 (Schmitt 1970:363; Black 1990:274-275). This, in itself, is a good argument for not applying the 20:1 depopulation ratio to Hawai'i as Stannard seeks to do.

This is not to say that Hawaiians were not dying of introduced diseases before 1800. The venereal diseases were certainly taking their toll as, almost certainly, were tuberculosis and probably a variety of other infections as well. In general, these killers worked more slowly than did smallpox and measles, but they did their damage nonetheless, and because of the effect that venereal diseases had on the reproductive

capacity of those infected, they probably contributed most to the long-term decline of the Hawaiian population. The point here, however, is that even if a 20:1 population decline rate were a reasonable ratio to apply to some American Indian populations, Hawai'i's isolation would make it an inappropriate model for these islands.

Finally, as we shall see the historical record does not support the "die-off," the disappearance of 50 percent of the precontact population (400,000 people), that Stannard's model requires during the first twenty-five years of contact (1778–1803). People aboard dozens of ships passed through Hawai'i after 1786 and before 1804, but not one of them made mention of a major epidemic (except that venereal disease was noted by a number of visitors). Let us now take a look at this record, starting with the islands' "discovery" in 1778.

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Captain James Cook's expedition first made contact with native Hawaiians on 19 January 1778. On the twentieth his two ships anchored off Waimea, Kaua'i. The *Resolution*, his flagship, lost its anchorage on 23 January, but the *Discovery*, commanded by Captain Charles Clerke, remained off Waimea for another two days. Clerke then followed Cook to Ni'ihau where the two ships remained until 2 February 1778 when they left for the northwest coast of America. In all, Cook and his men had contacts with islanders for fourteen days. Sailors went ashore, as did Cook himself, on Kaua'i and Ni'ihau. Despite Cook's precautions—he did not allow sailors with recognizable cases of venereal disease ashore and forbade all sexual contact with Hawaiian women (Beaglehole 1967:265–266)—there is little doubt that venereal disease was introduced into Hawai'i by Cook's men in 1778.

Upon the expedition's return to Hawai'i from the Arctic Ocean in November of 1778, a number of Hawaiians appeared off Maui with venereal infections, and according to Lieutenant King, "[t]he manner in which these innocent People complained to us, seem'd to me to shew that they consider'd us the Original authors" of the disease, having left it with them on Kaua'i ten months earlier (ibid.:498). According to Samwell, some of them seemed to have come out to the ships specifically to request treatment (ibid.:1152). Captain Clerke, Midshipman Riou, and Ship's Surgeon John Law also record that Hawaiians complained to them that the disease was introduced by the expedition on Kaua'i (ibid.: 576, 475, 576n). Apparently, because "the venereal" was already widespread, there was no longer any effort made to keep the sailors and

Hawaiian women apart, and from this time on, both Hawaiian men and women were in close contact with the crews of the ships. A number of Hawaiians, including the future King Kamehameha, slept on board the *Resolution* off Maui, and chiefs from both Maui and Hawai'i islands visited the ships in Maui waters.

For the next month and a half, from 27 November 1778 to 17 January 1779, the two ships sailed off the coasts of Maui and Hawai'i Island, sometimes close to shore, at other times far from the coasts, trading for supplies with the hundreds of men and women who paddled off to greet them and searching for a safe harbor in which to anchor. That harbor was finally located on 17 January at Kealakekua Bay along the southwest coast of Hawai'i. As described earlier, thousands of Hawaiians were there to greet them, probably 20,000 or more, although no estimate is provided for all of those within the bay and the hills surrounding it. It was an appropriate reception for their god Lono.

For the next nineteen days the ships remained in the bay, often crowded with Hawaiians of both sexes during the day and usually with women at night. Two young Hawaiian chiefs were appointed by Kalani'opu'u, the ruling chief of Hawai'i Island, to preserve order on the ships. They and other Hawaiian chiefs were in regular contact with the *haole* sailors. Apparently most, if not all, of the crew were allowed on shore at various times, and those on shore mixed easily with Hawaiians, entering their houses and attending their games and *hula* dances. One group traveled inland for five days, and a shore party remained encamped at the Hikiau *heiau* (temple or religious site), which functioned as an observatory.

On 4 February the ships left Kealakekua but returned a week later, on the eleventh, as the *Resolution* had sprung her foremast and needed repairs. Friendly, if somewhat strained, relations were resumed, and as William Samwell put it, "[m]ost of our old sweethearts came to see us" (ibid.:1191). Then on 14 February Cook was killed and from that point on, contacts between *haole* and Hawaiian were hostile and distant, except that a number of "sweethearts" remained aboard the ships and at least seven of them accompanied the ships when they left the bay for good on 22 February. The women traveled with the crew to O'ahu, where they were left at Waimea Bay on 28 February.

From Waimea on O'ahu the expedition proceeded to Waimea, Kaua'i, where once again it was greeted by several thousand Hawaiians. As at Kealakekua, many of the Hawaiians who met the ships were not from Waimea. Because the ships arrived at night, Samwell was not

able to observe the scene that he described a year earlier, in January 1778, when "the whole island seemed to be in motion, a prodigious crowd of natives assembling from all parts & running along shore a Breast of the Ships" (ibid.:1082). The expedition remained at Waimea from 1 March to 8 March, and once Kamakahelei, the ruling chiefess, arrived, relations were friendly and Hawaiians and *haoles* interacted congenially. Finally, from 8 March through the fifteenth, the ships lay anchored off Ni'ihau and once again Hawaiians and *haoles* interacted both on the ships and ashore. On 15 March 1779, the ships weighed anchor for the last time, and, as far as is known, the Hawaiian Islands were not visited by another Western ship for seven years.

As we have seen, by the time Cook's expedition left the islands, venereal disease was firmly established—"universal among the Islands to Windward," according to Samwell (ibid.:1225). We can be quite sure that both syphilis and gonorrhea were here and probably chlamydia as well. Because several of Cook's crew were consumptive, it seems reasonable to assume that tuberculosis was also transmitted to the Hawaiian people, although contrary to Stannard's assertions (1989:70, 99), this is not an established fact. It is certainly *possible* that the Hawaiians escaped this plague, at least temporarily. In any case, there is no evidence before 1819 of any widespread infection with tuberculosis (Frey-cinet 1978:58), and, as we will see, only two individuals were reported by Western observers before 1819 who exhibited symptoms clearly associated with this disease. My own view is that it probably was introduced early, either by Cook's crew or soon thereafter, that eventually it became a major killer of Hawaiians, but that it was not the fulminating epidemic that Stannard suggests could "have cut the population [of Hawai'i] in half before the next group of Europeans arrived in 1786" (1989:71). A raging epidemic of this nature hardly would have disappeared by 1786, and nothing in the records left by the numerous visitors to the islands during the ensuing decades suggests that it occurred.

Stannard also claims that Cook's ships brought "an influenza virus or some other deadly upper respiratory infection" (1989:70). In support of this he cites William Ellis, another of the ships' surgeons. Ellis has the following to say about the incident:

In general they seem to be very healthy, and we observed several who appeared to be of great age. As to diseases we saw none who labored under any during our stay, except the vene-

real complaint; coughs and colds, indeed were pretty general, and one man died. From what we could learn of his disorder from the natives, it was a violent griping or colic. (Ellis 1969:151)

Note that Ellis does not claim that the man died from a respiratory infection but “from a violent griping or colic,” that is, from what was probably an intestinal disorder of some kind. King’s report of the incident says that they were attracted to the house of the dead man by the “mournful cries” of a woman and her daughter, and that they found “the body of an elderly man” (Beaglehole 1967:623). Samwell, who was also impressed by the mournful wailing, described the man as “middle aged” (ibid.:1169–1170). Neither Samwell nor King described the cause of death, but it is important to note that the man died on 26 January 1779, nine days before their first departure from the bay and seventeen days before the break in friendly relations occasioned by Cook’s death. If this were the beginning of a deadly epidemic as suggested by Stannard, where is the record of other deaths? If others had died, the ships’ crews certainly would have heard the wailing of the mourners as they did, very clearly, following the deaths of Hawaiians who died in the violence surrounding Cook’s death. Surely, if any significant number of Hawaiians were dying from an explosive epidemic of influenza or of any other disease, the evidence would have been there for men like King and Ellis to record. In fact, King and other members of the crew can only be described as *niele*, curious, or even nosey with regard to the death and burial customs of the Hawaiians, both before and after the death of their commander (ibid.:621–623).

When the expedition returned to Kaua‘i in March 1779, the Hawaiians again complained of the venereal disease that had been introduced among them the previous year and that had already resulted in several deaths (ibid.:586). They made no mention, however, of an explosive epidemic of any kind, as one would expect they would had such a disease been introduced, and none of the crew members recorded any evidence of such disease. Following the ships’ departure from Ni‘ihau, King summarized his observations:

We shall finish our account with their diseases. The Venereal is certainly now the Worst, . . . The next in fatality to this is the disorder arising from their debaucherys in the excess of the Kava [*‘awa*, a mild intoxicant]. In these People the Skin looks as if parched by the weather, it is of a blackish appearance, but in

its excess, it is mixt with a whiter Cast, and Scales peel off the Skin; the Eyes are red, inflamed, & very sore, the body is Eme-mecat'd & infirm, & it makes them very stupid.

Boils are very general, & we supposed these foul humours to arise from too much Salt which they eat with flesh & fish. (Ibid.:629)

Seven years passed before the next recorded European visitors touched at the islands, and then in the space of less than a week, four vessels appeared in Hawaiian waters: two English merchant ships engaged in the fur trade, commanded by Nathaniel Portlock and George Dixon, and two French vessels on a voyage of exploration under the command of J. F. G. de La Pérouse. Although the French arrived several days later than the English ships, I will deal with their observations first because they remained in Hawaiian waters for less than forty-eight hours, during which time they made only one brief stop on the southern coast of Maui.

As his ships sailed along the east Maui coast in 1786, La Pérouse was delighted by the waterfalls and the populous villages that lined the shore. The Hawaiians who paddled out to his ships impressed him with their energy and water skills. However, he was neither delighted nor impressed by the Hawaiians who greeted him when he went ashore at what is now called La Pérouse Bay. He found them friendly and docile but was appalled at the wantonness of the women, whom he found "little seductive, their features had no delicacy and their dress permitted us to observe, in most of them, the ravages of venereal disease" (La Pérouse 1968, 1:341). M. Rollin, the ships' physician, provides us a more graphic and more clinical description:

The beauty of the climate, the fertility of the soil, might render the inhabitants extremely happy, if the leprosy and venereal disease prevailed among them less generally, and with less virulence. These scourges, the most humiliating and most destructive with which the human race are afflicted, display themselves among these islanders by the following symptoms: buboes, and scars which result from their suppurating, warts, spreading ulcers with caries of the bones, nodes, exotoses, fistula, tumors of the lachrymal and saliva ducts, scrofulous swelling, inveterate ophthalmiae, ichorous ulcerations of the tunica conjunctiva, atrophy of the eyes, blindness, inflamed prurient herpetic eruptions, indolent swellings of the extremities, and

among children, scald head, or a malignant tinea, from which exudes a fetid and acrid matter. I remarked, that the greater part of these unhappy victims of sensuality, when arrived at the age of nine or ten, were feeble and languid, exhausted by marasmus, and affected with rickets.

The indolent swelling of the extremities . . . is nothing more than a symptom of an advanced state of elephantiasis. . . .

The nature or quality of the food may concur with the heat of the climate to nourish and propagate this endemic disease of the adipous membrane; for the hogs even, the flesh of which forms the chief part of the food of the inhabitants of Mowee, are many of them extremely measly. I examined several, and their skins were scabby, full of pimples, and entirely destitute of hair. On opening these animals, I found the caul regularly sprinkled with tubercles, and the viscera so full of them, that, in the least delicate stomach, the sight could not but have produced nausea. (Ibid., 2:337–338)

M. Rollin was almost certainly wrong in attributing any of these symptoms to leprosy or elephantiasis, but he obviously viewed a very diseased population—so diseased, in fact, that it was not until the establishment of the leper settlement at Kalawao in the 1860s that an entire Hawaiian community could be described in a similar fashion. Before the 1860s, individual Hawaiians were depicted with some of the symptoms Rollin describes (Freycinet 1978:57–58; Chapin 1839:252–262), but the overall picture that he paints is so completely at odds with the observations of every other visitor to Hawai'i that we are left with an enigma. Did Rollin get it wrong? Had the Hawaiians established their own quarantine settlement—a development for which there appears no precedent and that would have been culturally unlikely? All we can say with certainty is that what Rollin observed was not reflective of Hawaiian health elsewhere in the islands either at that time or in the future. If it had been, we can be sure that other visitors would have described similar scenes. Incidentally, despite the purchase and slaughter of thousands of hogs by *haole* sailors in the ensuing decades, there is not a single mention of a diseased animal, nor of a sailor nauseated by tubercle-marked viscera.

Portlock and Dixon, who inaugurated the fur trade between the northwest coast of North America and China, had both served under Captain Cook during his visits to Hawai'i in 1778–1779, so they were familiar with the islands. Altogether they spent almost six months in

Hawai'i, divided among three visits from May 1786 to October 1787. Much of their time in Hawaiian waters was spent aboard ship, but they and William Beresford (who actually wrote what is called Dixon's *Voyage*), went ashore on a number of occasions on O'ahu, Kaua'i, and Ni'ihau. Kealakekua Bay on Hawai'i Island was also visited. While at anchor off the various islands, their ships were visited by hundreds, if not thousands, of Hawaiians of both sexes.

Portlock repeatedly describes "amazing numbers of natives" (Hawai'i), "vast numbers of natives" (O'ahu), or "vast multitudes of inhabitants" (Kaua'i) who came to greet the ships (1968:62, 71, 167). Clearly the novelty of Western ships and their goods had not worn off. On Portlock's second trip to O'ahu in December 1786, he was informed that Waikiki was virtually deserted as most of the inhabitants "were come to the bay where we lay [Maunalua Bay—off today's Hawai'i Kai], led either by business or curiosity" (ibid.:164).

Portlock was an observant reporter and was not uninterested in the impacts of disease. While on the northwest coast of North America, he observed the effects of scurvy on American Indians and also reported what he believed to be scars caused by smallpox (ibid.:252, 271). He made no mention of disease in Hawai'i, and all of his descriptions of the Hawaiians suggest that they were active and in good health. He records no signs of depopulation except possibly on Ni'ihau, where in January 1787 he reported: "The country seemed very poorly cultivated, and Abbenoe [Opunui, a chief] told me, that since we took our stock of yams in, the people having in great measure neglected the island, barely planting enough for their own use; and that some had entirely left the island, and taken up their future residence at Atoui [Kaua'i]" (ibid.:184). Portlock seems not to have considered the possibility that, as his ships took away eighteen tons of yams and other produce from the island in the previous June, many of the Hawaiians may have left for Kaua'i to ensure they would have enough to eat.

Beresford, with Dixon on the *Queen Charlotte*, also had a good deal to say about population. We have already seen that he believed Lieutenant King's estimate of 400,000 to be too high "by one half." He made careful observations of the coasts he saw, which did not include the windward sides of Maui or O'ahu, and apparently not Hanalei Valley of Kaua'i, although he says he had "an opportunity of viewing the north coast of Atoui [Kaua'i] or that part of the island directly opposite Why-moa [Waimea] Bay . . . where he saw . . . not any level ground, or the least sign of that part of the island being inhabited, at least by any considerable number of people" (Dixon 1968:135). He also saw both the

windward and leeward sides of Hawai'i Island, although not its rugged eastern coast.

Unlike Portlock, Beresford does discuss diseases in Hawai'i. We have already commented on his mention of the young chief suffering from a skin infection on his leg. He also writes:

The inhabitants of these islands appear subject to very few diseases, and though they doubtless have been injured by their connection with Europeans, yet so simple is their manner of living, that they pay little regard to this circumstance, and seem to think it of no consequence.

I am inclined to think that most of their disorders proceed from an immoderate use of *ava*; it weakens the eyes, covers the body with a kind of leprosy, debilitates and emaciates the whole frame, makes the body paralytic, hastens old age and no doubt brings on death itself. (Ibid.:276–277)

The first paragraph above in all probability refers to venereal disease, an affliction of greatest consequence for the Hawaiian people in the long run, but not by itself likely to halve the population of the islands in twenty-five years. The second paragraph refers to the drinking of *awa* or kava, a mild intoxicant that, contrary to Beresford's belief, was unlikely to have any serious long-term consequences (Bushnell 1993: 122), although it was often noted by early visitors who believed it to be very debilitating. Beresford described a Hawaiian chief, the previously mentioned Abbenoe, who gave up *awa*, and between June 1786 and January 1787 "his condition had improved dramatically," and even "his eyes [which] seemed weak," in 1786, "looked fresh and lively" (ibid.:118).

Beresford also noted that agriculture was expanding on Oahu:

A spirit of improvement seems to animate the people to a very great degree; and it is really astonishing to see the different aspect many parts of the island now wear to what they did the first time we anchored there. The bay we lay in [Maunalua], and Whitittee [Waikiki] bay in particular, are crowded with new plantations, laid out in the most regular order and which seem to be in a most flourishing state of cultivation. (Ibid.: 265–266)

This improvement was probably not the result of an expanding population but more likely the result of rebuilding after a major conflict on

O'ahu in which, first, Kahekili, the high chief of Maui, conquered the island, probably in 1783, and then suppressed a major revolt against his rule in late 1785 and early 1786. Samuel Kamakau describes these battles as bloody (1961:136-140), and according to historian Lilikalā Kame'eleihiwa "the destructive forces of war . . . in Hawaiian terms always meant ravaging the land by cutting down cocoanut trees, destroying taro patches and breaking down the walls of fishponds" (Dorton 1986:95). The "new plantations," however, suggest that population was not declining in any significant way.

"C. L.," probably William Colin Lauder, a young Scottish surgeon (C. L. 1984: introduction, n.p.), who accompanied Dixon, and John Nicol, who was with Portlock, have also left accounts of these voyages. Both include descriptions of the Hawaiian people, but neither makes mention of disease other than the results of drinking 'awa (ibid.:57; Nicol 1937:95-99).

Other British and American fur traders who arrived in the late 1780s have left accounts of their visits. These include John Meares (1967), James Colnett (1940, n.d.), and George Mortimer (1975). Meares made no mention of disease on his three trips to the islands, during which he visited Hawai'i, O'ahu, Kaua'i, and Ni'ihau. Mortimer, who was in the islands for only a few days, left a description of Kamehameha, which includes one of the earliest descriptions of a skin ailment that assailed the Hawaiians. "His majesty is one of the most savage looking men I ever beheld, and very wild and extravagant in his actions and behaviour: his body, in common with many of his subjects, was full of small ulcers; which may be occasioned by drinking awa, and their eating a great quantity of salt and salt fish" (Mortimer 1975:52). Lieutenant King's previously cited observation that "boils are very general" leaves open the question of whether this ailment was new to Hawai'i. In any case the disease was not by itself life-threatening; Kamehameha, for example, lived for another thirty years.

James Colnett, who claimed "some little knowledge of the language," having visited Tahiti twice before, felt threatened off O'ahu when he was "surrounded by Near a Thousand Indians in double and single canoes," manned by physically impressive Hawaiians whom he described as "the stoutest & most powerful men I ever saw & our crew in general but small; as to myself some of the stoutest of them requested I would sit in the palm of their hands, & many of the Crew they carried about in their arms as Children" (n.d.:150-151). Although most of Colnett's comments indicated that the Hawaiians he dealt with were in good health, he was aware of the presence of venereal disease, mentioning it in both of his accounts (he visited the islands twice). But one of his

observations is of particular interest because it provides an idea of how benign many Euro-Americans considered the disease.

Both crews left those isles [Hawai'i] in perfect health, except those who had been so unfortunate as to catch the disease left by the first discoverers, but its become of no consequence; constitution & method of diet have almost eradicated it; most of those who caught it had it so gently they were in a little time cured, not above two or three obstinate cases. (Ibid.:181)

A good picture of the islands in those years is provided by six different accounts (Minson 1952; Ingraham 1918; Bartlett 1925; Fleurieu 1969; Howay 1941 [Boit and Harwell]), all the results of visits in 1791–1792, along with the records from the Vancouver expedition that will be discussed below. Warfare on Maui between the forces of Kamehameha and Kahekili dominated politics, and a civil war on Kaua'i resulted in first Ka'eo and then Ka'umuali'i being installed as "king" (Minson 1952: 82). Joseph Ingraham claimed that Kahekili had assembled 20,000 fighting men on Maui and had a fleet of 700 war canoes. He didn't see all the fighting men but described the beach "covered with canoes to a vast distance which we could see by the help of our glasses" (Ingraham 1918:23–24). All six visitors saw impressive numbers of Hawaiians and several commented on the high state of cultivation that they observed, although Manuel Quimper (Minson 1952:76) and Ingraham (1918:27) both reported difficulty in procuring hogs because of the war. None of these visitors mentions disease, but it must be pointed out that only two of them remained in the islands for more than two weeks.

Between 1792 and 1794, George Vancouver led a British expedition into the Pacific that visited Hawai'i three times. Altogether, his ships were in Hawaiian waters for more than four months, and four extensive written accounts survive from the expedition, two from Vancouver's flagship *Discovery* (Vancouver 1967; Menzies 1920) and two from the *Chatham* (Bell 1929–1930; Manby 1929). Vancouver, Thomas Manby, and Archibald Menzies had all been in Hawai'i before—Vancouver with Cook in 1778–1779 and Manby and Menzies with Colnett on the *Prince of Wales* in 1788—so each of them brought some perspective to their accounts as well as some familiarity with the Hawaiian language.

Problems of communication between *haole* and Hawaiian certainly existed, but by this time a number of white men were living in the islands, including John Young and Isaac Davis (from 1790), who served as interpreters and business agents for the ruling chiefs. Most of those

who recorded their visits to the islands, starting with Vancouver and Menzies, report on discussions with Young or Davis or with two other foreigners who established themselves on O'ahu in the 1790s, Don Francisco de Paula Marin and Oliver Holmes. Additionally, a number of Hawaiians had signed on as sailors aboard trading ships and had learned a smattering or more of English. For instance, Vancouver's expedition returned one Hawaiian from Europe, who had been away from the islands for four years and who functioned as an interpreter in 1792 (Menzies 1920:15-16).

The observations recorded by the Vancouver expedition are particularly important because they have provided the basis for most claims of significant early depopulation in the Hawaiian Islands. Most nineteenth-century historians, and Vancouver himself, blamed the apparent depopulation on warfare. Stannard is the first to argue that disease was responsible for a catastrophic number of deaths in the eighteenth century. Let us look at what Vancouver and his men have to say.

In 1792 his ships spent two weeks in the islands. Only the *Chatham* entered Kealakekua Bay, so Vancouver did not see the "swarms of Inhabitants" reported by Bell (Sept. 1929:11). Vancouver did meet with several Hawaiian chiefs, including Ke'eaumoku and Ka'iana, off the Kona coast of Hawai'i Island, and from them he learned about the state of war that existed between Kamehameha of Hawai'i and Kahekili on Maui. After proceeding to O'ahu at Waikiki, he learned that both Kahekili, the "king" of that island, and Ka'eo, the ruling chief of Kaua'i, had departed for Moloka'i (on the way to Maui) with most of their warriors.

This in great measure seemed to account for the small number of inhabitants who visited us and the wretched condition of their canoes, and the scanty supply of their country's produce which they brought to market. On the shores the villages appeared numerous, large and in good repair, and the surrounding country pleasingly interspersed with deep though not extensive valleys; which with the plains near the seaside, presented a high degree of cultivation and fertility. (Vancouver 1967, 1:161-162)

Menzies, who accompanied Vancouver on shore, reported:

On landing we were surprised to find so few inhabitants, and on enquiring into the cause, they told us that Kahekili, the king of the island, with all his warriors, numerously attended, were

at Molokai, on their way to Maui to join Kaeo, king of Kauai, in preserving these islands from the rapacity of Kamehameha and Kaiana . . . and indeed we had no reason to doubt this information from the small number of indifferent canoes which visited the ship, and the scanty supply of refreshment we received in comparison to the fertile and cultivated appearance of the country. (Menzies 1920:23)

At Waimea on Kaua'i the expedition was met by relatively few inhabitants. Menzies was informed that all the chiefs and warriors had departed for Moloka'i for war (*ibid.*:27). Vancouver, too, was convinced that "incessant warfare" was the problem:

If we may be allowed to decide by comparing the numerous throngs that appeared on the first visits of the *Resolution* and *Discovery*, and which were then constantly attended on all our motions, with the very few we have seen on the present occasion the mortality must have been very considerable. It may however be objected that the novelty of such visitors having, at this time, greatly abated, is sufficient to account for the apparent depopulation. But when it is considered, how essential our different implements and manufactures are now become to their common efforts, that reason will not apply; as every individual is eager to bring forth all his superfluous wealth on the arrival of European commodities in the market. . . .

At Whyteetee, I had occasion to observe that, although the town was extensive and the houses numerous, yet they were thinly inhabited, and many appeared to be abandoned. The village of Whymea is reduced at least two-thirds of its size, since the years 1778 and 1779. In those places, where on my former visits, the houses were most numerous, was now a clear space, occupied by grass and weeds. That external wars and internal commotions had been the cause of this devastation, was further confirmed by the result of my inquiries on Owhyhee, when it did not appear that any of the chiefs, with whom I had been formerly acquainted, excepting Tamaahmaaha was then living; nor did we understand, that many had died a natural death, most of them having been killed in these deplorable contests. (Vancouver 1967, 1:187-188).

Thomas Manby, on the same 1792 visit to Waimea cited by Vancouver above, had occasion to follow the Waimea River several miles inland

and commented that "the Back Country in the Valleys as far as I went was cultivated in a very superior state of Industry" (Manby n.d.: entry under 9 March 1792), suggesting that the apparent depopulation was, as at Waikiki on O'ahu, primarily the result of warriors and their families going off to Maui. Lieutenant King, with Cook's expedition, had described a similar circumstance in 1779 at Waimea on Oah'u, "where we found but few of the Natives," and although "Wooahoo [O'ahu] was as beautiful as any Island we have seen, & appear'd very well Cultivated and Popular [populous]; they told us here that most of the Men were gone to Morotoi [Moloka'i] to fight" (Beaglehole 1967:584-585).

Clearly the Hawaiian chiefs were capable of mobilizing large numbers of men to conduct their wars: Manby was informed that Kahekili had an army of 10,000 warriors on Maui (Manby, June 1929:19); as we have seen, Ingraham was told he had 20,000. At least hundreds more must have been engaged in supplying those armies, for as Kahekili informed Vancouver, Kamehameha's warriors had so "ravag[e]d . . . Maui and the neighboring islands" that "they were at that time under the necessity of collecting provisions from Woahoo [O'ahu] and Attowai [Kaua'i], for the maintenance of their numerous army" on Maui (Vancouver 1967, 2:186).

Stannard claims that "the language barrier made communications with the Hawaiians difficult" and that, as a result, Vancouver "conjectured that the great decline [in population] was caused by warfare" and not "(as the Hawaiians had claimed all along) to disease and a disastrously plummeting birth rate" (1989:135). (Note that what Stannard [ibid.] claims to be " 'intirely abandoned' villages" are houses in Vancouver's account, not villages, and are easily explained by the absent "warriors, numerously attended"—precisely as Menzies said. Vancouver's description of Lana'i, quoted by Stannard, as "a 'deary and desolate' place of 'apparent sterility' with but a few scattered miserable habitations" was made as a result of observations off the southwest coast of Lana'i. Although King had described Lana'i as "very pleasant . . . and full of villages," as Stannard says, he had the advantage of seeing the northeast coast of that island. Captain Clerke, in 1779, described the western shore as "not in the least cultivated" [Beaglehole 1967:570]. Stannard [1989:10] also states that a Hawaiian chief claimed "that before 1778 both Lana'i and Kaho'olawe had been 'fruitful and populous islands' [and] that in just 15 years [they] had become 'nearly overrun with weeds, and exhausted of their inhabitants.' " However, Stannard does not explain that the chief blamed this occurrence entirely upon eleven years of war and that this [Maui] chief was merely confirming what Vancouver had learned from other chiefs on the island of

Hawai'i [Vancouver 1967, 2:179–180]. None of the Hawaiians with whom Vancouver, or any other early visitor to the islands, talked ever blamed disease or a declining birthrate for depopulation.)

As we will see, there is good reason to believe that Vancouver greatly overestimated the decline of the Hawaiian population, and, in fact, he confirmed with his own eyes what the various chiefs had told him about the destructiveness of Hawaiian warfare. In March 1793 he was taken on a tour of Lahaina on Maui:

The taro was growing among the water, but in a very bad state of culture, and in very small quantities. To the ravage and destruction of *Tamaahmaah's* wars, the wretched appearance of their crops was to be ascribed; of this they grievously complained, and were continually pointing out the damages they had sustained. The despoiled aspect of the country was an incontrovertible evidence of this melancholy truth. Most of the different tenements in the lands formerly cultivated, were now lying waste, their fences partly or intirely broken down, and their little canals utterly destroyed; nor was a hog or a fowl any where to be seen. By far the larger portion of the plain was in this ruinous state, and the small part that was in a flourishing condition, bore the marks of very recent labour. (Ibid., 2:198)

In 1796 William Broughton, who had been with Vancouver in 1793 but was now in command of his own ship, visited Lahaina. His report shows clearly how temporary was the kind of devastation observed by Vancouver three years earlier.

Our excursions on shore were frequent, and the natives civil. The cultivation was excellent; and the extent of the ground made use for that purpose reminded us of the scenery of our native country. There were numerous productions of tarro, sweet potatoes, melons, sugar canes, gourds, and pumpkins, amidst groves of breadfruit trees and cocoanuts. . . . As the village was the residence of a Chief, since dead, it had been entirely destroyed on the arrival of Tamaahmaah, and presented a spectacle of wretched hovels which sheltered the inhabitants, who occasionally lived there, till the conqueror had made a distribution of the island among his followers. (Broughton 1967:37)

Meanwhile, the journals of Vancouver's expedition provide us with good evidence that depopulation was not yet a significant problem in Hawai'i in the 1790s. In February 1793, when the expedition returned for its second visit, the ships were greeted at Kealahou Bay with a reception that rivaled that of Captain Cook fourteen years earlier.

On the following morning long before day broke, canoes began to assemble around us; they flocked into the bay from all parts; by noon you could scarce see the water in any part of the bay as the Canoes formed a complete platform. The number of people then afloat could not be less than thirty thousand. The noise they made is not to be conceived everybody loudly speaking and being assisted by the musical cries of some scores of Hogs and Pigs absolutely stunned us on board the Brig. The shores in every direction were lined with people; and such was the curiosity to approach the Vessels that many hundreds swam off to us, holding up [in] one hand a little pig, a fowl or a bunch of Plantains. (Manby, July 1929:41)

Manby no doubt overestimated the number of Hawaiians, but even Vancouver admitted to being "stunned" by the reception (1967, 2:130). Edward Bell didn't provide a number but he painted a similar picture:

The multitudes of the Natives who came off to the Ships surpass'd anything I had an idea of. The Canoes were so thick and numerous, that they fairly covered the surface of the water a considerable distance around us,—and I believe I may safely say that I might have walked over them from the Chatham to the Discovery; the Shoals of people that came swimming off, particularly women, were immense, but the utmost good humour and orderly behaviour was preserved. (Bell, Oct. 1929: 66–67)

And Menzies: "We were at this time surrounded by the greatest concourse of natives in their canoes that we ever saw collected afloat in these islands. Upon the most moderate computation we were pretty certain their numbers could not be short of three thousand, besides the beaches being lined with vast crowds gazing from the shore" (1920:67).

A reception like this was unusual. What made it possible was a combination of factors. Most important was the fact that Vancouver was in command of two warships and he represented the British government.

Vancouver had made this clear to Ke'eaumoku and Ka'iana, two of Kamehameha's most important subordinate chiefs, on his visit the previous year. Second, when he returned to Hawai'i on this occasion, Kamehameha and many of his followers were already collected at Kealakekua. Finally, due to contrary winds, Vancouver's ships spent more than a week slowly closing in on the bay, allowing time for Hawaiians from all along the coast to assemble there. That Kamehameha considered the occasion important is illustrated by the formal welcome he gave to Vancouver: dressed in his brilliant feather cloak and helmet, he stood upright in the first of fourteen double-hulled canoes, his own paddled by forty-six men. The procession circled the ships three times before Kamehameha boarded the *Discovery*, where he made Vancouver a present of eighty hogs and other produce (Manby, July 1929:41).

The following year (1794) at Kealakekua, the crowds were even greater as all the chiefs congregated to discuss a treaty of cession of the island of Hawai'i to Great Britain in exchange for British protection. While on shore one day, Edward Bell attended a *hula* performance, of which he recorded "many of the chiefs declared that since Captain Cook's time they had never seen such a concourse of spectators at any one entertainment on the island, nor such an assemblage of their nobility collected in one place" (Jan. 1930:124). Later that year at Waimea on Kaua'i, the same village that in 1792 had appeared "reduced at least two-thirds its size," Vancouver wrote of a *hula* performed by 600 dancers and that the "spectators were as numerous" as on Hawai'i Island, where he had estimated the crowd at not less than 4,000 (1967, 3:76-77, 41). The point is simply that where there may have been some reason for Vancouver's belief that the islands were suffering severe depopulation in 1792, there was none in 1794.

Moreover, if diseases had been actively contributing to population decline in Hawai'i, there is good reason to believe that Vancouver or Menzies would have noticed it. Both men were interested in diseases and looked for their effects on native peoples. While in Tahiti before sailing to Hawai'i, Vancouver commented upon the effects "the lamentable diseases introduced by European visitors" had had on Tahitians (*ibid.*, 1:147), and, like Portlock before him, he noted on a number of Pacific Coast Indians the "indelible marks" of smallpox, which he believed was "very fatal amongst them" (*ibid.*, 1:242).

Menzies, the ship's surgeon, observed several cases of minor illness in Tahiti and noted that Omai, a Tahitian whom Captain Cook had returned to the Pacific after spending several years in England, had

died of a disease . . . which particularly affects the throat with soreness and tumours and it is said to be brought to these islands by a Spanish vessel in the year 1773. Though I wished much to see the symptoms & appearances of this disorder which is said to have made great havoc among the natives, yet I must confess that my feelings were equally gratified in finding that it is now a rare occurrence, for I did not observe a single case of it in all my excursions [*sic*] during our stay at Otaheite. (Menzies n.d.:120)

It is significant to note that Tahiti was in direct contact with diseased population centers (i.e., cities) on the Pacific coast of South America—where the Spanish came from—and thus suffered earlier and more seriously from the effects of contagious epidemic diseases. Similar dense populations did not yet exist on the Pacific coast of North America. Thus, a disease such as smallpox could, and apparently did, race through the Indian tribes of the North Pacific coast, but the population density there did not allow the disease to become endemic (see McNeill 1976:49–76). Thus, unless a Euro-American ship happened to be on the coast at precisely the time that smallpox was present, and the ship had on board sailors who had not yet had the disease, and the ship then sailed with dispatch for Hawai'i, it is unlikely that smallpox could have reached Hawai'i from the American West Coast until relatively large urban centers had been established there. This is precisely what seems to have happened, as smallpox first reached Hawai'i in 1853, shortly after the gold rush turned San Francisco into an urban center.

The Vancouver expedition did encounter several cases of disease during its four months in Hawai'i between 1792 and 1794. Enemo (Inamo'o), an important Kaua'i chief, was described by Manby in March 1792 as “upwards of fifty . . . his person very disgusting from the quantity of Ava he had swallowed, his eyes inflamed to a violent degree, and his skin sore and scaly” (June 1929:23). The following year Vancouver described the chief's situation in terms that suggest that he may have been suffering from more than 'awa drinking:

His limbs no longer able to support his aged and venerable person, seemed not only deserted by their former muscular strength, but their substance was also entirely wasted away, and the skin, now enclosing the bones only, hung loose and uncontracted from the joints, whilst a dry white scurf, or rather scales, overspread the whole surface of his body from head to

foot, tended greatly to increase the miserable and deplorable appearance of his condition. (Vancouver 1967, 2:223–224).

In 1794, however, we find “Enemo still alive, and though in a somewhat better state of health than when we left him [in 1793], he was yet in a most deplorably emaciated condition.” Indeed, in the intervening year Enemo showed that he was still filled with vitality as “he had attempted to acquire the supreme authority” on Kaua‘i by leading a rebellion against Ka‘eo (*ibid.*, 3:74).

Similarly, Kalanikupule, a son of Kahekili and the ruling chief of O‘ahu, in March 1794 was described by both Vancouver and Menzies as being very ill, so ill that he could not walk and had to be lifted aboard Vancouver’s ship in a chair. Menzies described him as “very weak and emaciated from a pulmonary complaint that now provided hectic symptoms” (1920:125). Menzies’s editor in 1920 captioned this section of his account “Kalanikupule, A Sufferer From Tuberculosis,” although the original journal made no mention of consumption (Menzies n.d.: 286) and Kalanikupule was far from dead. A year and a half later, he led his army into battle against Kamehameha, and following his defeat, escaped into the mountains of O‘ahu, where he wandered for another year before he was finally captured and sacrificed to the conqueror’s war god (Kamakau 1961:172). One other case of what may have been tuberculosis was reported by Menzies, who described a young wife of Kahekili whom he had met in 1788, “as now [in 1794] indeed wonderfully altered, she was in appearance far gone in a consumption, and the bearing of two or three children, had wrought such a change in her features for the worse, that added to ill health, the cares and anxiety of her married state, gave her the appearance of a woman advanced in years” (1920:88). We have no record of her fate.

The only other mentions of possible ill health by Vancouver’s associates were that, twice, Menzies noted groups of Hawaiian men coughing. On both occasions, however, the Hawaiians were at very high altitudes, accompanying Menzies on his ascents of Hualalai and Mauna Loa (*ibid.*:158, 191). The fact that he observed such coughing only on the mountain heights and not on the lowlands suggests that coughs were not common in Hawai‘i at this time. These observations also indicate that Menzies was very alert to the possibilities of illness. If disease had been ubiquitous in Hawai‘i, he would have noticed it.

As mentioned previously, William Broughton returned to Hawai‘i on a voyage of discovery in 1796. He visited twice that year, spending a total of two and a half months in the islands. His reports are particu-

larly interesting because his visits followed soon after Kamehameha's conquest of O'ahu, so he saw that island in turmoil. His first stop was at Kealakekua Bay on Hawai'i Island, where in early January he was informed, apparently by John Young, that Kamehameha was on O'ahu with 16,000 men and most of his chiefs (Broughton 1967:34). At Lahaina, Maui, as described above, he observed the fields that had been destroyed several years before in an "excellent" state of cultivation. But on O'ahu he found chaos as a result of the recently concluded conflict. "The situation of the natives was miserable, as they were starving," he said, adding, "as an additional grievance [they were] universally infected with the itch [scabies]" (ibid.:40). Moreover, food was doubly scarce because Kamehameha was requisitioning everything to feed his army, which was preparing to invade Kaua'i.

Kaua'i, too, was affected by affairs on O'ahu. Broughton reported that "a chief from Wohahoo [O'ahu], named Taava [Keawe], had taken up arms against Tamoerrie [Ka'umuali'i], the son of Tayo [Ka'eo], and at present possessed the district of Wymoa [Waimea]" (ibid.:44). In July, on his second visit, rebellion had spread to Hawai'i Island, although he found the Kona district prosperous and "everything was plentiful" (ibid.:70). On O'ahu, though, the devastation had not yet been repaired, and

the island, in respect to provisions, was worse than ever, for all the hogs had been destroyed when the inhabitants [the losers in the conflict] left to go to Atooi [Kaua'i]; and we could procure no vegetables, as they had perished through neglect of cultivation. This scarcity had caused the destruction of many of the unfortunate natives, who, through absolute want, had been induced to steal whatever came in their way. For these thefts they were murdered by their chiefs in the most barbarous manner, and many were burnt alive. It was computed that Tamaah-maah had lost six thousand of his people by the conquest of this island, and subsequent calamities. (Ibid.:71)

It is not clear whom Broughton received this information from nor how accurate it was, but there obviously had been considerable suffering and mortality. Broughton made no mention of disease as a factor in this devastation. He did note, once again, that scabies was a problem, along with the venereal diseases. "The people were generally affected with the itch, but triflingly so with venereal complaints" (ibid.:70). These are his only mentions of disease.

Captain Peron, who visited the islands in late 1796 and early 1797, made no mention of disease and found the Hawaiians “*en general d’une beaute remarquable, ils sont robustes et alertes; leur physionomie est douce et pleine d’expression; leur taille élevée surpasse celle des Européens; toutefois ils sont moins grands que les habitants desiles des Amis, mais leur caractere et plus gai, plus loyal et plus communicatif*” (1971: 149). Neither did he make mention of the destruction occasioned by Kamehameha’s wars of conquest, although he was impressed by the conqueror himself.

Ebenezer Townsend stopped at both Hawai‘i Island and O‘ahu in 1798. By then he found the lands of O‘ahu “in the highest state of cultivation” (Townsend n.d.:19). On his trip from Hawai‘i Island to O‘ahu he was accompanied by Isaac Davis and two other white men in the employ of Kamehameha. From them he gleaned considerable information about Hawaiian culture, which he described with a good deal of understanding, considering his short stay. He also had something to say about population decline: “Owhyhee [Hawai‘i Island] was calculated to contain one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants [Lt. King’s estimate] when visited by Capt. Cook; at this time I do not believe it contains over one hundred thousand; it probably has been reduced considerably in the late wars” (ibid.:24–25). Townsend provided no explanation as to how he arrived at his computation of the 1798 population or whether he saw any evidence of depopulation, so it is impossible to say whether the island’s population had declined significantly or not. Given his discussions with Davis, who had been in the islands since 1790, his failure to mention disease suggests that no explosive epidemic had contributed to population decline in recent years.

Townsend’s portrait of the Hawaiians certainly is not that of a people who are living through a demographic holocaust. He describes them as “an active and well made people,” “very happy people,” “as happy as any people on earth,” and “These people are so happy that I reflect much on the subject” (ibid.:25, 26, 30, 31). Finally, he notes that neither Kamehameha nor his people were addicted to alcohol. “They are naturally averse to drinking spiritous liquors” (ibid.:29). This statement is in dramatic contrast to later descriptions of Hawaiians, who took to drinking alcohol in excess as their culture collapsed around them and they began to experience demographic disaster.

Richard Cleveland, in 1799, described a similar healthy and happy population: “The contrast which their cleanliness forms with the filthy appearance of the natives of the Northwest Coast, will not fail to attract the attention of the most unobserving. Nor have they less advantage

over their Northwest neighbors in the size, shape and gracefulness of their persons, and in the open, laughing, generous and animated expressions of their countenances" (1855:110). On neither this visit nor on his return in 1803 did Cleveland mention disease. Similarly, the logs of the *Eliza*, the *Caroline*, and the *Hancock*, all of which visited Hawai'i briefly at different times in 1799, make no mention of disease in the islands. Amaso Delano, who was in Hawai'i for ten days in 1801, left the islands with several Hawaiians in his crew whom he made sure were inoculated for smallpox in China, but he made no mention of any disease in Hawai'i.

Finally, John Turnbull, an Englishman who had spent some months in Tahiti, arrived in Hawai'i in late 1802 and remained in the islands for more than a month, leaving in early 1803. Turnbull was very much aware of the terrible depopulation that the Tahitians were experiencing. He blamed their losses on infanticide, disease, and ignorance. Infanticide was the worst, while ignorance made diseases that, to Turnbull's mind, should not have been serious into deadly killers (1813:334–335, 366–369). Turnbull's own ignorance and bigoted perspective may have blinded him to a clear understanding of what was happening, but not to its results. In Hawai'i he saw a very different picture:

The Sandwich Islands are extremely well peopled, all circumstances of their nature and fertility being considered; and the women, according to Mr. [John] Young's account, are said to be more numerous than the men, whereas in Otaheite the women are not reckoned to amount to more than one-tenth part of the population.

The striking difference in the population of these two spots may in great measure be imputed to the absence from Owhyhee of the horrid practice of infant murder. The increased population of the Sandwich Islands has had one good effect; it has compelled the natives to exert themselves in assisting nature by the more careful cultivation of the soil, and other branches of industry. (Turnbull 1813:229–230)

The Hawaiian people were "strong, hardy and capable of enduring great fatigue," according to Turnbull (*ibid.*:234), in contrast to the Tahitians who lacked both industriousness and the will to resist disease.

Meanwhile, between 1796 and 1804, Kamehameha moved to consolidate his power throughout the windward islands and to prepare for the conquest of Kaua'i. Late in 1796 he returned to Hawai'i Island to sup-

press a revolt against him there. Its leader was caught and sacrificed early in 1797. Following his priests' advice, Kamehameha had left no chief of rank on O'ahu who might rise up against him but returned to Hawai'i with all his chiefs (Kamakau 1961:173-174) and almost certainly with the bulk of his army. He remained on Hawai'i, preparing for the conquest of Kaua'i by building a fleet of more than 800 *peleleu* canoes—double-hulled vessels rigged like sloops. In late 1802 he left Hawai'i with his fleet and stopped at Lahaina, Maui, "where they remained about a year feeding and clothing themselves with the wealth of Maui, Molokai, Lanai, and Kahoolawe" before moving on to O'ahu in 1803, "the whole company, including Kamehameha's sons and daughters with their households, and those of his brothers and sisters, his counselors and chiefs, and over a hundred in each household" (*ibid.*: 187-189).

* * * * *

The year 1803 marked twenty-five years since Captain Cook inaugurated contact between Hawaiians and the outside world. During this time, as we have seen, dozens of ships touched at the islands and a significant number of accounts were written describing Hawai'i, its people, and their society. Some writers were neither well informed nor observant, but others were remarkably perceptive. Most of what we know about eighteenth-century Hawaiian culture and history derives from their writings and from the later works of a handful of Hawaiian scholars who based their accounts largely on oral traditions.

The picture of Hawaiian society that emerges at the beginning of the nineteenth century is one that appears to be remarkably healthy, both physically and culturally. Hawaiians were at war throughout most of this period, but although warfare may have been altered somewhat with the introduction of firearms, it was a traditional activity. Stannard and anthropologist/historian John Stokes agree that mortality from warfare was probably not a significant factor in causing population decline (Stannard 1989:137). Moreover, after 1796 Hawai'i was at peace even if preparations for war continued.

According to Stannard, this same twenty-five-year period was a time of horror during which the population of the islands was cut in half from at least 800,000 to 400,000. It was a time when epidemics raged through Hawai'i and tens of thousands were "slaughtered" by disease. In fact, there was at least one serious epidemic that probably did result in the deaths of thousands of Hawaiians before 1803: venereal disease.

Visitors to the islands often reported it, although they usually underestimated its impact. More important than the lives cut short, from a demographic perspective, were the number of children not born as a result of sterility or miscarriage.

Stannard is probably correct in arguing that tuberculosis was introduced early. It would become a serious killer as well, although the historical evidence does not indicate that it was widespread: serious catarrhs or diseases involving coughing are not reported in the literature until 1818 (Marin 1973:227) and not described as widespread until 1819 (Freycinet 1978:58). Even writers who spent months or years living with Hawaiians, including Don Francisco de Paula Marin, Archibald Campbell (1967), John B. Whitman (1979), and William Shaler (1935), did not report any serious illnesses before 1818.

It could be argued that disease was so common a feature of "civilized" societies that its existence in the islands was considered unremarkable and therefore went unnoticed. It is quite likely that some visitors did not notice coughs or colds or felt them unworthy of comment, but we have seen that other observers did notice diseases among other native peoples (for example, Portlock, Vancouver, Menzies, and Turnbull; see also Shaler [1935:57-58]) and felt them worthy of comment. The Hawaiians, too, certainly would have noticed if diseases were destroying them with the vengeance that Stannard maintains. Tahitians knew they were dying of foreigners' diseases and they complained about it vociferously, even blaming specific European visitors for their various ailments (Turnbull 1813:336) in much the way Hawaiians complained to Cook's men about the introduction of venereal disease in 1778 and 1779.

Then in 1804 the Hawaiians did experience a major, explosive epidemic in which thousands of people died, the *ma'i 'ōku'u*:

It was a very virulent pestilence, and those who contracted it died quickly. A person on the highway would die before he could reach home. One might go for food and water and die so suddenly that those at home did not know what had happened. The body turned black at death. A few died a lingering death, but never longer than twenty-four hours. If they were able to hold out for a day they had a fair chance to live. Those who lived generally lost their hair, hence the illness was called "Head stripped bare" (Po'okole). (Kamakau 1961:189)

And, predictably, the Hawaiians did notice it and did complain. Word of its virulence reached Urey Lisiansky at Kealakekua Bay on Hawai'i

while it was still raging on O‘ahu, so he canceled his planned stop in Honolulu (1968:111–112). William Mariner heard of it when he was refused permission to anchor his ship in the inner harbor at Honolulu in 1806 because he had a sick man on board. The chief of the island refused Mariner’s ship entry “for fear of introducing disease into the country, which they said happened on a former occasion, from an American ship” (1827:56). Isaac Iselin was informed in 1807 that one of the reasons for the “want of hands” needed to cultivate the fields around Kealakekua Bay “was a kind of epidemic or yellow fever, said to have been brought to these islands a few years ago, and which made dreadful havoc amongst the natives” (n.d.:68).

For the Hawaiian historian Samuel Kamakau, it became “the pestilence” that he refers to repeatedly in his history, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*. John Papa ‘Ii, another Hawaiian historian, spoke of “the great death rate among chiefs and commoners in the year 1806, perhaps owing to the terrible ‘oku‘u disease, when the epidemic spread among all of the chiefs and commoners of these islands” (1959:46). David Malo claimed, “In the reign of Kamehameha, from the time I was born until I was nine years old, the pestilence, (mai ahulau,) visited the Hawaiian Islands, and the majority (ka pau nui ana) of the people from Hawaii to Niihau died” (1839:125).

Stannard has used Malo’s statement to support his contention that half of the population of Hawai‘i had disappeared *before* the *ma‘i ‘oku‘u* struck Hawai‘i in 1804 (Stannard 1989:57). Stannard argues that since Malo was born in 1793, he would have been nine in 1802 before the ‘oku‘u arrived. However, no one knows exactly when Malo was born (Malo 1976:vii). Hawaiians did not record dates nor did they calculate ages. (This will also explain why ‘Ii, writing many years later and looking back to the period of his earliest youth, could only have guessed that the ‘oku‘u occurred in 1806, instead of 1804 as confirmed by Western sources.) Malo’s *ma‘i ahulau* (the generic term for pestilence) was clearly the same epidemic that he and others elsewhere referred to as the *ma‘i ‘oku‘u*. In the same paragraph from which the above quotation is taken, Malo says, “there have been no seasons of universal sickness since [the *ma‘i ahulau*], men have died but not in an uncommon degree” (1839:125). Yet in another publication, probably written in the following year, 1840 (Malo 1976:xviii), Malo specifically refers to the ‘oku‘u: “After that Kamehameha sailed for Oahu and the pestilence in truth made its appearance, raging from Hawaii to Kauai. A vast number of people died and the name *okuu* was applied to it” (ibid.: 245–246).

We know from other sources that Kamehameha was on Hawai‘i and

Maui in 1802 and 1803—Richard Cleveland introduced Kamehameha to horses at Lahaina in June 1803 (1855:208–209)—and that he did not move his army to O‘ahu until late 1803 or early 1804. We know from Lisiansky that the ‘ōku‘u was in progress in June 1804 (1968:111–112). Finally, we may assume that Malo was using exaggeration for effect when he claimed that a “majority” of the people died from the *ma‘i ahulau*. In concluding his 1839 paper, “On the Decrease of the Population on the Hawaiian Islands,” where the claim was made, he lists the “principal evils” that had contributed to the decline in numbers of Hawaiians:

1. The illicit intercourse of Hawaiian females with foreigners.
2. The sloth and indolence of the people at the present time.
3. The disobedience of the chiefs and people to the revealed word of God. (Malo 1839:130)

Significantly, he does *not* list the *ma‘i ahulau*.

In the years following the gathering of Kamehameha’s army on O‘ahu and the ravages of the *ma‘i ‘ōku‘u*, several foreigners began to notice deserted fields. William Shaler was the first:

In the true spirit of despotism, it is well understood that no chief of the least consequence can reside anywhere but near the person of the monarch, and, as he migrates through his dominions, he draws after him a train more destructive than locusts. Everything is abandoned to follow the sovereign, the country being deserted by all who have an interest in its cultivation and improvement of the lands, they are of course neglected. I have observed many fine tracts of land lying thus neglected, even in the fertile plains of Lahyna: the ruined enclosures and broken dykes around them were certain indications of their not having been always in that state. (Shaler 1935:82–83)

In 1807 Isaac Iselin, as a result of an excursion to the fields above Kealahou Bay, commented on the fertility of the area and the variety of crops being grown. “But upon the whole, the country exhibits a great want of hands to improve it. The depopulation is evident and may in some manner, be accounted for, by the absence of the chiefs and warriors, and still more for an epidemic or yellow fever, said to have been brought to these islands a few years ago, and which makes dreadful havoc amongst the natives” (Iselin n.d.:68).

These observations tell us a good deal about what was happening in

Hawai'i during these years. There can be little doubt that diseases and not just the *ōku'u* were contributing to the number of deserted fields, but this was not the whole story as both Shaler and Iselin concluded. Kamehameha was in the process of settling his army on O'ahu. It is no coincidence that the deserted fields observed by Iselin (on the Kona coast above Kealakekua Bay) and Shaler (at Lahaina) were located in those areas that Kamehameha's army had abandoned as a result of its deployment to O'ahu. We do not know how large his army was, but we do know that it was numerous enough, particularly as family members joined the fighting men on O'ahu, that extensive new lands had to be brought under cultivation on that island. Kamakau tells us that Kamehameha "made the great (taro) patches at Waikiki called Keokea, Kalamanamana, Kualulua, and cleared the land at Waikiki, Honolulu, Kapalama, Kapa'uiki, Keone'ula, Kapa'eli and all the other places; and when all the lands were under cultivation he cultivated *mauka* [toward the mountains] in Nu'uanu as far as Keawawapu'ahanui" (1961:192).

From other sources, including native testimony during the Māhele land division of the 1840s and archaeological research, we know that new land and irrigation systems were opened at Anahulu Valley on O'ahu to provide sustenance for Kamehameha's warrior chiefs and their retainers. This expansion continued into the second decade of the nineteenth century (Kirch 1985:235–236; Kirch and Sahlins 1992:36–54, *passim*). It seems very unlikely that such expansion, including the arduous labor of creating completely new irrigation systems, would have been necessary if half of O'ahu's population had perished by 1803, as Stannard contends. (Archaeological evidence from Waimea-Kawaihae and other parts of the Kona coast of Hawai'i Island suggests that Hawaiian populations in these areas did not begin to decline significantly until about 1835 [Clark 1988:27]. Again, immigration may have influenced settlement in these areas as Kamehameha returned to Kona to live in about 1812, accompanied by a number of his retainers and, no doubt, their retinues [Kamakau 1961:197–198]. However, Kamehameha's return to Hawai'i does not appear to have precipitated the massive resettlement that had taken place on O'ahu during the preceding decade.)

Several foreign visitors to O'ahu during this period commented on the extensive cultivation, particularly in the area around Honolulu. Archibald Campbell, who lived on O'ahu for more than a year, was carried (he was crippled) to lands he was given behind Wai Momi (Pearl Harbor) about twelve miles west of Honolulu in March 1809: "We passed by footpaths, winding through an extensive and fertile plain, the whole of

which is in the highest state of cultivation. Every stream was carefully embanked, to supply water for the taro beds. Where there was no water, the land was under crops of yams and sweet potatoes" (1967: 103). Ross Cox, in Honolulu for about two weeks in 1812, made an excursion "between four and five miles from Honaroora" into "the interior" of O'ahu. "In the course of this tour we did not observe a spot that could be turned to advantage left unimproved. The country all around the bay exhibits the highest state of cultivation, and presents at one view a continued range of picturesque plantations, intersected by small canals, and varied by groves of cocoanut trees" (Cox 1957:34).

Neither Cox nor Campbell, nor Samuel Patterson (1967), George Little (1846), Stephen Reynolds (1970), Gabriel Franchère (1969), nor Alexander Ross (1966), all visitors to the islands before 1812, nor John Whitman (1979), who was a resident of O'ahu from 1813 to 1815, reported any incidence of disease during their time in Hawai'i. In fact, the only people to report any diseases at all, from the time of the *ōku'u* until 1818, were Otto von Kotzebue in 1816 and Don Francisco de Paula Marin who, in the early 1810s, mentioned in his journal several individuals who were ill (Kotzebue 1821, 1:342; Marin 1973:200, 202, 213). (Marin's journal is full of references to widespread sickness but only from the end of 1818 and into the 1820s. Several of these infections were deadly to large numbers of Hawaiians [Marin 1973:227, 231, 237, 259, 260-262, 272-273, 286-293].) As late as October 1818, Captain Vasily Golovnin could say "epidemics and infections are unknown to the inhabitants" (1979:219). Golovnin was in Hawai'i for only ten days but was accompanied by an interpreter, Eliot de Castro, a long-time resident of the islands, and got additional information from Marin. Both Marin and Castro, incidently, were "physicians" of a sort.

None of this is an attempt to argue that depopulation was not taking place. Indeed, Hawaiians must have been dying faster than they were being born even if they were not subject to major, explosive epidemics. In what was probably 1815, as John Whitman traveled around the island of O'ahu, he noticed that some areas "on the eastern side of this island" were deserted. "The natives say that the islands were much more populous in former times than at present, and the traces of cultivation in lands that are now waste, and other signs of population visible in many places, render it probable that they are correct" (Whitman 1979:86).

Similarly, Kotzebue in 1817 saw uncultivated fields that he believed were unattended because the natives were "obliged to fell sandalwood," but he also believed that the population was diminishing as a result of

both vices (liquor and tobacco) and the “many bad disorders” brought by Europeans (Kotzebue 1821, 2:199–200). Other Euro-American visitors in the 1810s noticed signs of serious social dislocation including, but not limited to, the widespread drinking of alcohol and the use of tobacco by children. Both Peter Corney and Adelbert von Chamisso were amazed by the “indecorous sport” with which Hawaiians treated their gods (Corney 1896:102; Kotzebue, 3:249). Others, such as Golovnin, were appalled at the treatment that chiefs accorded commoners (1979:208). In 1816 Samuel Hill decided that *haole* influence had not been good for Hawaiians, whom he found “degenerated in character, conduct and morals” compared with his earlier visit to the islands in 1810 (1937:366). Hawaiian culture was far from collapse, but it was beginning to show signs of strain, probably both a symptom of and a contributor to further demographic decline.

* * * * *

Since the number of Hawaiians inhabiting the Hawaiian Islands in 1778 will never be known with certainty, any estimate of that number will have to be based upon hypotheses. David Stannard's *Before the Horror* marshals a number of hypotheses and argues with impressive logic for a precontact population of at least 800,000 people. On the basis of logic alone Stannard's conclusions may appear irrefutable, particularly to individuals who are unfamiliar with all of the disciplines upon which his argument is based.

This essay has tried to show that Stannard's hypothetical arguments are far from convincing and that the available historical record does not support the demographic collapse that his theory presents. In fact, the record shows that the Hawaiian population did not decline by 400,000 people between 1778 and 1803. Except for the *ma'i 'ōku'u*, explosive epidemics responsible for the deaths of large numbers of people—the kind Stannard's theory requires—did not occur in Hawai'i until at least the 1820s.

Hawaiians did die of newly introduced diseases before 1803, including venereal diseases, tuberculosis, gastrointestinal infections, and even common colds. Lacking exposure to Old World diseases, they undoubtedly were particularly vulnerable to many of these alien infections, but their geographic isolation and perhaps other factors, such as their remarkable cleanliness, excellent diet, and healthful environment, resulted in an experience with diseases that was very different from that of many parts of the New World, where such killers as smallpox, mea-

sles, influenza, and bubonic plague occurred early after Europeans arrived, and sometimes often.

Still, the Hawaiians died and, as Stannard has reminded us, for the Hawaiian people it was a time of "horror." From a historian's perspective this demographic collapse, continuing as it did throughout the nineteenth century, is the most important "fact" in Hawaiian history. As disease destroyed their numbers, it destroyed the people's confidence and their culture; finally, it was the most important factor in their dispossession: the loss of their land and ultimately of their independence. Consider how different the fate of Hawai'i would have been if the numbers of Hawaiians had remained undiminished from what they had been in 1778, whether those numbers were 300,000 or 400,000 or more—instead of the fewer than 40,000 who remained alive in 1893.

NOTE

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BOOKS NOTED

RECENT PACIFIC ISLANDS PUBLICATIONS: SELECTED ACQUISITIONS, JANUARY–APRIL 1993

This list of significant new publications relating to the Pacific Islands was selected from new acquisition lists received from Brigham Young University–Hawaii, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, University of Auckland, East-West Center, University of the South Pacific, National Library of Australia, South Pacific Commission Library, and the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau Centre for Pacific Development and Training. Other libraries are invited to send contributions to the Books Noted Editor for future issues. Listings reflect the extent of information provided by each institution.

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